

Heirs of Old Venice

By the Same Author

TWO CHILDREN IN OLD PARIS
SHAKESPEARE AND THE HEART OF A CHILD



VENETIAN REFUGEES IN ROME

*The bronze horses of Saint Mark's in the court of
the Roman palace under which they found
safety from the dangers of war.*

THESE proud Greek horses, the work of Lysippus or some sculptor of his time, stood above a triumphal arch of imperial Rome until Constantine transported them in the fourth century to the great hippodrome of Constantinople. In 1204 the Doge Dandolo removed them to Venice, where they stood, in spite of the boast of Doria the Genoese that he would bridle them, until Napoleon bore them away to Paris. When Napoleon had fallen, Francis of Austria gave them back to Venice "as a conqueror would give to a captive queen one gem of her broken crown." After the end of the World War, they were returned once more to Venice and were raised to stand again in their matchless dignity above the main portal of Saint Mark's.

HEIRS OF OLD VENICE

BY
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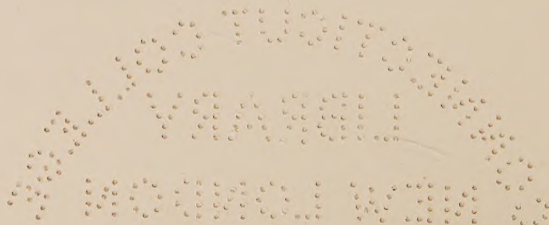
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To Moses Stephen Slaughter
Delegate of the American Red Cross in Venice

93447

Preface

Eamus ad bonos Venetos

Old Saying



RHAPSODIES mingled with lamentations have spent themselves upon the theme of Venice. During a century of captivity, first to the Austrian oppressor and then to her foreign population, she has been adored for her beauty and desired for her pleasures and wept over for her decay. She has been an inspiration to poets and painters and musicians; she has been scoffed at by satiric pens; she has been a "disappointment" to unromantic travelers. How many of those whose names are immortal have passed luxurious hours floating in the shadows of the "sun-girt city" weaving their own dreams into her "fabrics of enchantment piled to heaven"! She has drawn to her also the *dilettanti* of many nations, and strange fantasies have taken form under the fretted and frescoed ceilings of her palaces. But if Venice is a rare sea-bird attractive to the lovers of beautiful plumage, the sea-bird cherishes its young as tenderly and falls by a blow as quickly as the sparrow and has another function than to provide æsthetic pleasure for its admirers.

Venice is the home of a sturdy race. Yet, for all the rhapsodists, the Venetians are little known. "For us," wrote M. Barrès, "the Venetians are no more. The population is made up of cosmopolitan millionaires and artists who are established in the old historic palaces and over whom pass incessant caravans of tourists." Ten years after this was

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written, in the summer of 1914, the foreigners abandoned Venice and left her to the Venetians.

Among those who heap praises upon Venice many are content, like M. Barrès, to see her die, rejoicing in the beauty of her death. Her magic charms their senses and holds them under a spell. They do not care to think about the problems of her life. They prefer to sentimentalize about her death.

Time has indeed wrought upon her forms of beauty a mysterious fascination. The dead centuries cling to her, tingeing her splendors with a subtle and pervasive melancholy. Her solid masonry, built to resist wind and tide, has become almost ethereal; the loveliness of fragility is added to beauty of line and color. But for all that, Venice lives. And if Mr. Howells, to whom she was a "fantastic vision—a place where our race seems to be in earnest about nothing; where people sometimes work, but as if without any aim; they suffer, but you fancy them playing at wretchedness"—if he had lived in Venice and worked with Venetians in the final year of their struggle with their ancient enemy, he must have learned of his experience that the spirit of a great people is not dead.

Not all of those who carried the city through the crisis are Venetians, for the entire nation rallied to her protection. But that all-important line, her internal defense, devolved upon Venetians. And one knows the true Venetian wherever he may be found, for the name means something more than dweller in a certain city. It denotes a heritage rather than a location. To be called "a Venetian" is an honor throughout

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Italy. For it is recognized as a fact that, through the drought of the Austrian régime and under the froth of a foreign population, the current of Venetian life has flowed steadily on, carrying with it the courage and independence of those early refugees from the Hun who built their city with great labor, in the name of Liberty, on the islands of the lagoon.

"To me, a Venetian," said Count Grimani, the revered Sindaco whom the people elected annually for thirty years, "the conduct of Venice reveals nothing new. I have always known that my fellow-citizens, under an exterior of gaiety and even of frivolity, have hearts open to the most noble idealism and that they still possess that innate sense of duty which was the glory of ancient Venice and aroused the admiration of the world in the memorable year of forty-nine."

To observe any people understandingly one must live with them and work with them. Especially is this true of the Italians, whose deep-seated reticence, in spite of their superficial expansiveness, is an obstacle which the tourist can seldom overcome. One must meet them a little more than half-way by entering into their purposes and sharing their troubles as well as their pleasures. The delegate for Venice and his co-workers in the American Red Cross had this advantage, that their undertaking was an integral part of the larger work done by the Venetians themselves. It was not super-imposed nor independent; it was merely supplementary to the efforts of the citizens to preserve the threatened life of the city. Working together for a common cause—for the soldiers, the children, the hospitals, for the relief

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of 50,000 inhabitants left stranded in a city deserted by those who had formerly employed their labor, we who were foreigners became for the time-being a part of Venice. We found ourselves making common cause with persons of all kinds and classes, from the Patriarch and the good Sisters to the gayest officer of the Navy, from the Admiral and General in command to the waifs and stragglers, from distinguished scholars and men of affairs to the most ignorant working-girl in the army of the unemployed.

For one who had long been a lover of Italy it was a strange experience to visit the island of Torcello, not to see the Duomo and admire its pulpit and screen, but to call at the houses of the people and find out what beside potatoes they had to live on and to consult with the parish priest about special cases of need and victims of air-raids; to visit the lace-making town of Burano, floating like a painted toy on the surface of the water, for the purpose of distributing food and clothing to children half-savage with hunger; to walk to every corner of Venice no longer in search of some distant church and its treasures but to inspect the soup-kitchens and *asili* of small children and the *ouvroirs* we helped to operate; to enter the hotels of former days and find them changed into hospitals filled with the sick and wounded from the front; to speed up and down the Grand Canal, catching glimpses of glorious façades from among boxes of condensed milk and piles of cotton and woolen cloth; to visit a convent of which one wing had been destroyed by a bomb and, passing through the Refuge constructed of sandbags on the

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ground-floor (since there was no such thing as a cellar), to listen to school children singing the praises of America and Italy and the new bond of brotherhood; to drive up toward the trenches in an army camion filled with "supplies," meeting the death-squads returning from the battlefield and hearing an occasional bomb that had passed over our heads exploding behind us; to slip through winding lagoons in a miniature launch to an emergency hospital where an English officer had just dropped down wounded from an airplane and was in mental misery because he could not speak the language of the physician; to listen to the interrogation of prisoners at the General's headquarters on the Piave and to return to the city where, day by day and hour by hour, instead of the calls and songs and whisperings of the traditional Venice, one heard the thunder of cannon and the voices of the watchmen of the air.

This changed aspect of Venice forms a picture of clear outlines in which human figures move and act. In retrospect, the mental vision is focused upon the Venetians. One who is prominent in the picture was a Venetian only by adoption and no true heir of Venice; but his presence throws into relief the prevailing sentiment of the time and makes clearer, by comparison and contrast, the persistent qualities of the Venetian-born. And if it be true that behavior in times of crisis is a sure criterion of character, then there is reason for preserving one's impressions of the citizens of Venice in the stress of war and passing them on to those to whom "Venice" connotes the gaiety of "A Toccata of Galuppi's" or the

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crumbling ruins of the "sun-girt city"—"eldest child of Liberty."

There are Venetians still, even the "good Venetians" of the proverb.

Gertrude Slaughter.

Madison, Wisconsin,

January, 1927.

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The City at War



IND in the corn, a tangle of clover under the fruit trees, fragrance of new-mown hay—yet I am in Venice! Five aeroplanes just now went sailing above me, one of them so close that its rumbling was deafening and the blackbirds stopped their songs and flew away in a cloud darkening the sky. Imperceptibly daylight has changed to moonlight. The dense-roofed aisles of the grapevine that stretch through the orchard are deep and cool and silent.

Beyond the orchard and the gardens is the house—an ancient grey and green Giudecca Palace over whose portico and tiled wings neglected vines climb at random, while fig trees and oleanders lean against its walls. Weather-beaten statues mount the gateposts and rose trees bloom in such profusion of color as to merit the proud epithet “Venetian.”

In front the old house faces the city. The window of the family chapel frames in a picture of the Salute, its towers piled like masses of cloud above the dark green of its cypress trees. The broad canal is lined with grey torpedo boats. Its placid water grows turbulent when they move in and out.

To-night, everyone says, there will be an air raid. The plucky little boats called MAS, top-heavy with their huge torpedoes, have slipped their moorings near our doorstep and gone out to keep guard in open sea. Two days ago the Italian fleet bombarded Pola from

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sea and air and if the weather holds it is time to look for retaliation. Yet to-night is not different from how many other nights that have come and gone and left Venice safe as if by miracle!

For there is never a clear moonlight night that is not tense with expectation and charged with memories. Moonlight in Venice has a new connotation. The war, which has changed the face of nature, has transformed the Venice moon from a standard of popular romance into an evil portent, a thing of terror to the fearful and a challenge to the courage of the strong. "That crescent moon," said a young Venetian soldier, "has only one meaning left. It is the symbol of the Turk."

Night after night we have stood on our balcony and looked at Venice lying pale or delicately colored between the sea and sky. She is fantastic, like her winged lion; unsubstantial, like the reflections in the water into which all of her corporeal existence is absorbed to disappear in shadow.

Yet nowhere along the outer rim of battle are the realities of war more grim and vital than in this city of enchantment. Nowhere have the problems of existence become more primitive. Nowhere do the waves of hope and fear drive more swiftly home.

Night after night, as we have hung over the marble railing losing the fatigue of the day's labor in the loveliness of Venice, we have seen the sky burst into flashes of flame, while the great stone house shook to its

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foundations and the windowpanes rattled in their frames and the thunder of bombs clashed and reverberated through the lagoons. And for days and nights the roaring of the guns was never silenced except now and then by the hoarse grumble of a Caproni soaring overhead. If it was silent on the Piave, the guns thundered from Montebelluna or the Grappa or the Plateau of Asiago. Or they sounded along the entire line, from where the blue hills seem to drop into the sea, over the roofs and campaniles of the long city to its farthest end, where, at every shot, they flashed against the sky and we knew that they were perilously near.

Ever since the Third Army made its stand on the Piave, Venice has been the advance guard among the cities of Italy. The concentration in her maritime zone of the marine, the military and the aviation service determines the character of her defense and gives it an expression as unique as Venice herself. We are wrong if we think of her as a hoarded treasure set apart to be guarded for the world. She is a living center of the enterprise. She is tuned to the pitch of high achievement, as if the blood of the Doges were still active in her veins. And, indeed, she retains to no small degree the independence of her age of glory. The history of Venice is not yet closed.

The Venetian Republic defied both Church and Empire and held back the Orient. To-day Venice is exposed on three sides to the enemy. Her opportunity

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is threefold, like her danger. London has nothing to fear on land nor Paris on the sea. Rome is almost as far from the imminence of battle as Washington. But Venice, ever since Caporetto, has been open to attack by air and sea and land. She has had need of the patience and strong courage that built the city of the lagoons in defiance of all the elements. (For her waters are not always placid. She can be struck by storms as fierce as any that ever battered a rock-bound coast.) And her ancient qualities have not failed her. "We are proud," said a recipient of the city's honors, —"we are proud to receive this token because it comes from Venice, whose courage has been our inspiration, whose high-minded purpose has been our strength."

That Venice, of all cities, should hold this position of responsibility and danger has been a circumstance of no slight importance in its effect not alone upon the world's sympathy but also upon the morale of the Italian army. A people who could be so stirred, so drawn together into unity of action, by the words of a poet as were the Italians by D'Annunzio after the disaster of Caporetto could not fail to be moved to the utmost effort by the peril of the fairest of Italian cities. Venetian painters, it has been noted, placed their scenes of Paradise in Venetian streets. In the young Italians, who have saved her and are saving Italy, the love of beauty is still alive. Their fantasy is energetic; and to them the call of the Venetian guard sounding from the housetops every hour of every night (*Per*

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l'aria buona guardia) has become a call to their chivalry as imperious as the summons to the Knight at Arms to protect the Queen of the Castle Perilous. "We are the defense of Venice," said the boyish officer of a battery out on a lonely island of the Lagoon. "This is a god-forsaken spot and we long to be in action. But what would you? We are the defense of Venice." And the native pride was in his voice.

But Venice, fragile and exquisite as she looks under the threat of guns, cannot be likened to anything helpless and inert, were it the most beautiful of women. Her defenders and her poets alike exalt her not because she appeals to their imagination alone, but because she has been the actual source of so many of those daring exploits that go far toward consoling the Italian for the sufferings of war. From her have gone forth expeditions that have harassed every port on the Austrian coast. Not a day that does not register some tentative. From her went out the little fleet that emboldened its way into the inner harbor of Buccari. From his anchorage in one of her canals young Rizzo slipped out one evening unobserved on his armed motorboat, encountered the Austrian fleet in open sea, ran in between two dreadnoughts, drove a torpedo into each of them and returned a hero. And before him, Pellegrini; so that now, it is said, only one of Austria's dreadnoughts is afloat. From her D'Annunzio went out to join the "Serenissima" on the flight to Vienna where they carried weapons more powerful than bombs. The mes-

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sage which the poet dropped in Venice on their return contains a universal sentiment;

"The 'Serenissima,' after having carried the sign of the Lion, forever propitious, into the sky of Vienna, throws down a greeting of love and pride to Venice the Beautiful, who, in all the long flight between wing and wing, was seen smiling, protectress adorable."

We never knew this city of Venice until now. We came to her in the old days in search of a city of carnival. We saw her conscious effort to be gay, and we smiled, or we pitied, and in either case we moralized upon her decay. She who had taught the world what it means to live grandly; she whose statesmen had been sages and her merchants nobles of high-hearted courage; she who next to Athens had made the bravest strokes for human freedom, standing alone against the world; she was reduced to an empty show of her former self. And we turned away from her present life and sought out her treasures of art and repeopled her carved palaces with scenes from Veronese's pageants or the records of Canale and Carpaccio.

To-day the visitor who may have gained permission to enter Venice will moralize no less, but his reflections will take another turn. He will comment first of all upon the pathetic changes the war has wrought. He will look for deserted streets and he will find them, and their desolation will be the more conspicuous because so much remains of the old familiar scene. Orange and russet sails still creep toward him as he

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stands in the Piazzetta, and black gondolas bend their tall prows as gracefully as before. Great hulks of boats come by with pale blue virgins or yellow lions painted on the bow, laden with fruits and vegetables—shining tomatoes piled high in pyramids with baskets of figs and peaches and apricots. The domes and turrets of Saint Mark's still pierce the blue and the Sansovino Library is untouched. The Campanile rises in its former majesty, though the Loggetta is hidden and the golden angel at the apex is covered with white cotton cloth. He will regret the hidden columns and supporting bases of the Doge's Palace, and he will sigh for a sight of the Porta della Carta no less than for the façade of the cathedral. But he will marvel that the dignity of the great square is in no way lessened, and the colors of the Palazzo will seem more exquisite than before.

In the Piazza at certain hours the *gonfalone* of San Marco still waves its gold-embroidered lion between the flags of Italy, while the military band plays and the pigeons fly about and bare-headed girls in their black long-fringed shawls wander as in the old days among the crowd. Only now it is a crowd of men wearing the insignia of war. Italian officers in their trim grey-green uniforms, their collars tipped with one bright color or another, mix with sailors in their middies and naval officers in their white linen, with Frenchmen in their blue and Englishmen in their khaki. The Bersaglieri are there with their drooping

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plumes, the tall Alpini with a stiff feather in every hat, the Arditi with their coats cut low and turned back for greater freedom, the Grenadiers, whose glory is to have been always at the post of greatest danger and to have been destroyed, re-formed, and destroyed again many times since the war began, and officers of the Sardinian brigade—those small men of the red and silver collars whose deeds of heroism will go down in history. On special days the scarlet coat of the Garibaldian completes the scene of changing color which cannot be dulled by piles of sandbags nor by the crude wooden structure that covers the façade of Saint Mark's.

But the visitor goes away from the Piazza and passes long rows of houses closed and barred. Streets and embankments are all but deserted. A few old women drag their feet through the silent squares whose very names are a mockery; "Shore of All the Saints," "Field of Saint Mary of the Lily," "Embankment of the Holy Ghost." Along the Grand Canal the hotels have become hospitals, and their convalescent patients in blue or white pajamas throng the courtyards and hang from the windows of every floor. When the adjoining hospital is crowded, they may be seen hanging over the carved lace balcony of "Dedemona's palace." Heavy barges loaded with soldiers pass slowly by, or flatboats of ammunition and supplies, freight cars towed on barges, or the Red Cross steamer returning from the front. Or an officer's shining brass-

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trimmed launch will come tearing through the canal, making everything else give way, or a hydroplane may dip into the water—a great round-eyed, stiff-tailed fish darting his head between white wings of foam—or the aeroplane brought down last night may be dragged along for all to see. A moment later and the other side of the picture is in view. Long files of women are waiting for the family rations at a free soup kitchen, swarms of ragged children are cutting their feet on the rough pavement or dragging along their *zoccoli*, impatient groups of sorry-looking boys and girls and women are struggling for a turn at a small shop where tiny portions of meat or fish are dealt out to them. Small youngsters are swimming in the neglected canals under the printed warning, "Swimming forbidden."

Unless he resembles the American who "would give all Italy for one floor of the Woolworth Building," the visitor cannot fail to observe that the palaces were never so beautiful, that art and nature have their way together in perfect harmony. But the price of that beauty is too great, he will say. Venice is too sad. She is a dead city. And perhaps he will add: "After all, why should such a city hope to exist in the modern world except as a relic? Has she not outlived her time?"

Such reflections are nothing better than the shabbiest sentimentality. To prove their falsity one need only enumerate in barest outline the acts of unspec-

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tacular, determined, wise, and cautious administration by which the city has met its obligations since the beginning of the war, when her foreign population deserted her, her ports were practically closed, her industries were stifled and her people thrown out of work. The promptness and far-seeing wisdom with which the Commune was reorganized for the emergency, the practical success of the citizens' committee for the care of soldiers' families, the patient carrying out of complicated plans—these things have been lost sight of since the evacuation of two-thirds of the population has created still graver problems.

Living in Venice and working with Venetians one gets below the surface of external change and touches permanent realities, until what seemed a change becomes a revelation. One comes to understand that the hardships of war have brought to light the real character of Venice and removed the false impression of other days. One sees her leaders, men of high position and women of noble birth, working in coöperation with the day laborer and the stranger, nursing in hospitals, directing workrooms, stretching out one hand to support the soldier at the front and the other to care for his family at home. One sees the qualities of perseverance and foresight which made the greater Venice lead the world in the care of her citizens and their answering loyalty.

Here, it must be remembered, everything has been sacrificed to the war. There are no profiteers as there

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are no cowards left in Venice. Mothers who have their four sons under arms; young girls who tell you that one brother is an Austrian prisoner, another is wounded and in a hospital, another is on the Grappa and another on the Piave; children by the thousands whose fathers are fighting or are mutilated or "lost"; a father whose only son has been killed or is even at this moment dying in a hospital; refugees from the invaded territory who have left all they own behind and are separated from their families; soldiers on leave exhausted by long months in the trenches, their wound-stripes on their arms; sailors who will start out to court death at sunset;—one spends the day with these people. Their tragedies are enacted over and over in one's sight. And then one slips away from the office in a gondola, around a corner where some bit of architectural beauty or a glimpse through an iron gateway into some garden or pillared courtyard intrigues the eye; and if one does not weep when the moment of relief comes it is because of the endless variety and mystery of Venice—she who knows storm and calm, can be sad and gay, is both old and young, fantastic and real, she who is at war and is yet at peace.

When the guns were roaring in the great offensive, the concert of chamber music went on as usual in the Marcello Palace. Four soldiers in rough uniforms and heavy boots were the performers and the audience consisted of the dignitaries of the city, the mayor and his council, generals and other high officials, who sat

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in the front rows of chairs while other people sat behind or stood up for two hours in the narrow balcony above. Between the Beethoven Serenata and a quartet by Debussy the war bulletin was read aloud by the mayor, the most honored man in Venice. When the applause had ceased the music went on serenely to the accompaniment of the cannon and now and then the call of a bargeman in the canal below or the sudden whir of an airship overhead.

High-spirited are these people. A well-known countess, wife of a Chief Power, explained as she sat among her red brocades that she had just been having the room done over in this new silk damask. She had found enough at Bevilacqua's (strange to say) to cover the table and the window seats and couches and all the chairs. "I am sick of the way we strip our rooms and carry things away for safety," she said. "I for one will have no more of it. I am having my garden trimmed and making it as grand as possible. I will set my house in order and if the Germans come they shall know I did not expect them."

When the same little woman was told that another countess, one of the idle few who came back to play poker with a few idle officers, had criticized her because in her high position she gave no entertainments, had no sense of her social duties, and kept her big house closed, she answered: "Tell her that on the day the war is over I will celebrate the victory with an open house of which even she will approve. I will give

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a ball at which she will find every luxury, however extravagant. But until that time my house is closed to her."

If they are high-spirited they can be also painstaking and devoted. Many of them, as the countess said, have emptied their houses and sent away their treasures. But their empty rooms have often become workshops where women sit and sew under the Gothic windows, making clothes for soldiers and their families. The Opera House, too, is a workshop. On the watery square where gondolas and launches once landed the gay crowd, barges loaded with bolts of cloth and army shirts slide past each other noiselessly. There is no splendor of color there. There is only patient, unlovely work.

The Venetians are not a people to bear easily the loss of pleasure and magnificence. They cannot keep at high tension incessantly. And even now they hold a celebration at every opportunity. Heroes are decorated in the Piazza. The banner of the city is blessed in Saint Mark's and carried solemnly across the square to be bestowed upon Rizzo and his sailors; a platform has been raised out over the water, and the authorities stand there to see the little boats whirl by strewn with oleander blossoms and stirring the water till the gondolas stand on end. The Patriarch summons the people into Saint Mark's; a catafalque has been raised between groups of cannon; mass is said behind the railing of the High Altar, whose columns bound in burlap re-

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semble the shrubs of a northern garden in their winter wrappings; and the Patriarch comes down to the floor of the cathedral, under the gold dome, and in the presence of the officers of the army and navy delivers a patriotic address in honor of those killed in battle. The guns captured from the Austrians are exhibited in the Public Gardens; a ceremony has been arranged to welcome them, after which the great, rosy general of the Bersaglieri is kissed by another giant general before the crowd, and ceremony and spontaneous enthusiasm thus unite together to the perfect satisfaction of the Venetian.

“This year,” said the daily paper, “the feast of the Redemption did not occur—that great traditional festival when the Church of the Redentore on the Giudecca is the luminous center about which the people spread like a vast flower of light, when the broad canal is a mirror for thousands of lanterns and songs rise in the mystic night. This year the moonlight was perfect. There was not a stir in the air. But instead of songs rising from the water the calls of the night watchmen echoed to the clear sky. But another year, when the feast comes round again, songs of victory will ascend, and the young generation will be crowned with laurel, and the Temple that was raised in gratitude for liberation from a great plague will resound with thanks for a new liberation, from an enemy who will creep with a snarl into his lair like a beast wounded to death. And then the Redeemer, appearing

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in a vision, will rise above his white votive temple into the sacred spaces to pronounce a benediction on the heads of heroes."

In such mood do these people endure their deprivations. For with all their fondness for adventure they are able to endure. That is the bright side of that easy-going *laissez-faire* which according to tradition is a large ingredient in the air of Venice. Patience is the word which seems to span the Venetian character from good to ill. It comes easily to the lips of every lazy workman and rises with the sigh of every waiting mother. A colonel of the army writes, "To accomplish any good work not patience but abnegation is required." The Venetian has always known how to possess his soul in patience. He is showing himself capable of abnegation.

When D'Annunzio says, "The light of a thousand days of victory is not equal to the light of one day of resistance," or that "never from the birth of Rome to the baptism in the Piave has there been a mightier undertaking than ours," he is speaking the general thought and lending reason to his boast that he is able to call forth the song that is in the multitude and the courage that they breathe. Yet, after all, his boast is vain. For their songs and their courage find myriad expression without his aid.

If, however, there is any single figure that represents the present temper of the Venetians it is that of the soldier-poet, D'Annunzio. A native of the Ab-

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bruzzi, he claims Venice as the city of his adoption. And Venice honors him, respecting the present impulse of his genius in haughty indifference to his practice and philosophy of life. There are other poet-soldiers in the war zone. He is the most conspicuous, the most talented, the most powerful. He is indefatigable, inventive, dominating. He has a symbol for every event and a will for every enterprise. "Let others maintain," he cries, "that we are fighting for the body. We know that we are fighting for the soul." He satisfies the popular craving for exalted expression and artistic form. And above all he is fearless. He said of Italy, "Out of the ashes of all the idols she has raised up the Deity of her Genius." The same thing might be said of the new D'Annunzio, the patriot whose home, since his return from France, is the Little Red Palace on the Grand Canal.

But the qualities typical of the Venetian character D'Annunzio will never attain. There is a well-known son of Venice who is at once native-born and a true representative of the spirit he inherits. Giacomo Boni lives in Rome, where his work has long since called him, in his house on the Palatine Hill, between the garden that he loves and the Roman Forum where he has worked. His fine head is somewhat bent with years but his large blue eyes glow with enthusiasm and suppressed passion. His body is broken but his mind is clear and his soul invincible. He lives in noble isolation, in proud endurance, and in calm acceptance of



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the great fact of life, the nearness of death. Beside him is the Greek marble he has recently unearthed, the figure of a young girl, delicately modeled; and as he touches it tenderly, he tells you that it was found buried under the wreck of a castle of the Frangipani destroyed in a feud with a Teutonic baron. "Thus," he adds, "did German barbarism bury in ruins this Pheidian image of divine intelligence." Boni's sincere and humble love of nature, his devotion to the advancement of knowledge, and his quiet humor make him, and not D'Annunzio, a true son of Venice.

To maintain that Boni in his isolation on the Palatine, where he is working out a plan for the increase of the agricultural product of his country, is a figure that typifies the Venetian spirit may seem to disregard the stirring activities of Venice at war. But, all the world over, the war has but tested and proved, it has not created character. And Boni, beside his image of divine intelligence, has in himself the tenacious power of life which is at the inexhaustible heart of Italy. Venice at war is endowed with the same indestructible power. The spirit of Venice asserts, as of old, that life is glorious and death is noble. She is striving, as of old, for ideal harmonies. A creative energy supports her—the lyric force which was the glory of the great republic, "Venice, the eldest child of Liberty."

Symbol and Reality



THE wingèd lion of Saint Mark that mounts guard over Venice holds up an open book on which is written: PAX TIBI, MARCE, EVANGELISTA MEUS. According to the tradition of the great Republic, this book, this evangel of peace, was closed when the nation went to war, its covers held tight together in the lion's grasp until such time as, by the will of the divine beast, the war should be ended and the book reopened.

To a people of poetic instincts whose actions are quickened by imagination, symbols are more than symbols; they are potent factors in the general mind, reacting upon the sentiment that created them. The quaint bronze lion on the column of the Piazzetta is to the Venetians no mere relic or decoration or curio. Whatever may have been the reason for leaving him uncovered and unprotected throughout the war, while the Virgin on the Campanile was wrapped in cloth and all the saints were hidden away, it was the reason of wisdom. It was no matter of indifference to the crowds of soldiers and sailors who passed that way to see him always standing there, his feet planted firmly, his tail stiff, his wings raised, ready to spring at the foe if the chance came, ready also to drop his wings and be at peace—a Venetian image of Victory.

No nation ever made war more hotly or pursued the ways of peace more calmly than the Republic called

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Serenissima. And Venice in the World War was true to her traditions. While she prayed for peace she strained every muscle in war. Everything else she cast aside. Like the ships that moved in and out through her lagoons, she was grey and grim and determined. A revelation to those who having known her in former days had never really known her, she revived the Venice of the old republic, and gave new meaning to her ancient symbols. The Duke of Aosta's army saved Venice from destruction. There is a sense in which Venice saved the armies.

Tried and tested as she was from that May morning when Austria aimed at her the first blow against Italy, exposed to attack by land and sea and air, two-thirds of her population sent off into exile and the others living on without means of livelihood, exhausted by raids from the air and by the constant thud of earth-shaking guns, Venice, stripped of her adornments and girt for war, had need of the strength of the lion and the resiliency of his wings. Delicate and fantastic as the city is—an artist's creation of carved ivory embedded in opals and emeralds—her people knew the hungers and the dangers of primitive existence. The eyes of the world were upon her treasures; her task was more complex than the world knew.

Venice had already closed the book of peace when the Italian government made its declaration of war. She was ready and eager. She had made her plans and taken the measure of her duties, knowing that her

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position made her a vital point of danger; not knowing that she would become the advance guard of Italy, a center of heroic enterprise and a fountain of courage to her defenders.

Two events of opposite import are equally to the credit of the Venetians. Weeks and months before the war began, by wise and concerted action the most precious Venetian paintings were taken from their frames, rolled on wooden cylinders, and transported beyond the Apennines. Then suddenly, in spontaneous reaction, the citizens of Venice openly rebelled. Protests were raised on every hand. The Confraternity of San Rocco passed a vote that their Tintoretto's should not be touched, and all the citizens applauded. They would not look on at this rifling of their city. Why should they subject their treasures to the grave risks of damage and hide them away as if they did not trust the national defense? Besides, Venice would not be Venice if this went on. The enemy could do no worse. Let them keep their possessions, their symbols, their glory, about them and go down, if need be, with soul and body whole. To dismember Venice was not to save her.

It was a show of spirit easily to be condoned when one thinks of what was happening. From the great Council Chamber of the Doge's Palace, which had glowed with the light and movement of historic victories—scenes of famous audiences of Emperors, Popes, and Doges, tributes to Venice from the Occi-

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dent and the Orient, imperial fleets conquered in the West and infidel armies in the East, the proud Barbarossa brought to his knees by the intercession of the Doge—Venice in history and Venice in symbolic legend depicted by the Tintoretto and the Bassano and Palma the Young and Paul the Veronese—the splendor was disappearing. Soon nothing would be left but bare walls and empty frames—a lifeless body.

Not all the arguments of Rheims and Louvain and Ypres, not the memory of Metternich and Radetzky, nothing but the actual rain of “Austrian manna” could convince the Venetians of the grim intentions of their enemy. When at last they were convinced, they suffered their treasures to be removed.

In the early dawn of the first day of the war, before the declaration had been published in Venice, an Austrian aeroplane dropped four bombs into the heart of the city. On the same day an Austrian squadron off Ancona turned seven large caliber guns on the Cathedral of Saint Cyriacus, a twelfth-century monument of ancient Venice that dominates the sea from a bold height. The Italian fleet had yet to clear the Adriatic of Austrian ships, compelling them to hide in the deep harbors of its eastern shore. And the Venetians, remembering now the bombardment of '49 when in three weeks twenty thousand balls were dropped on Venice, set themselves to labor and endure. The city was placed under marine command, and a double work began. While the aerial defense was developed into an

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effective instrument, vast plans of protection from bombs and shrapnel were carried out despite the unique obstacles of the city of the sea where the nicest calculation was required lest the weight that was needed to support and strengthen should crush the frail foundations of the walls.

The lion of the Apocalypse had "eyes before and behind." He would need to use them all if he was to protect the fragile beauty of Venice from the perils that beset her.

On the third day of the war the bronze horses were removed. In twelve hours of anxious labor, under a clear May sky, they were let down with ropes and derricks and placed in wooden frames for transportation—the proud Greek horses whose journeys had chronicled the rise and fall of empires. They had traveled from the western to the eastern world at the will of Constantine. In the year 1204 the Doge Dandolo brought them to Venice, where, in spite of the boast of Dorio the Genoese that he would bridle them, they stood in their matchless dignity until Napoleon bore them away to Paris and placed them in the Place du Carrousel. In a few years Napoleon had fallen and Francis of Austria had given them back to Venice "as a conqueror would give to a captive queen one gem of her broken crown." Now they were being rescued from a fate worse than capture; and before they should make the journey back from Rome, three powerful emperors were to lose their thrones.

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The famous equestrian statue of Colleoni was protected for a time by sandbags inside a wooden frame, until later, for greater safety, it too was taken down and removed to Rome. Brick supports were raised between the carved columns of the Ducal Palace; the façade of Saint Mark's and the Loggetta were hidden behind dull walls; places of refuge were built of sandbags under porticoes, inside courtyards, behind stairways; windowpanes were pasted with strips of paper that looked like prison bars. Piles of sandbags were pressed against arches and arcades and tombs and statues and doorways, never disturbing the universal harmony of color, but marring with their bulk the graceful lines and contrasting crudely with the patterns of the stones of Venice.

And so the city of gold put on her austere mantle of war. But the greatest test was yet to come.

II.

What happened in Venice when refugees from the north were pouring in and when evacuation partial or complete was inevitable, and what happened in the ranks when they turned about and held the enemy at bay on the Piave, are two stories of wholly different content. Yet both are heroic sagas and in both of them Venice performs a stirring part.

The first is a story of a human family reduced to primitive needs and primitive emotions. It is a story of hunger and thirst, of tears and laughter, of hope

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and terror, of threatened panic and triumphant courage. In the second story, Venice is an ideal of the spirit. She has become a light of leading—an image raised up out of human aspirations to great power; something akin to Athene Parthenos and the Holy Grail.

A Venetian poet has told in his native dialect the second story, of how the retreating armies, after Caporetto, turned and held, by their own strength and hers, an enemy gorged with victory. He has told it in verses worthy of his theme. And the Duke of Aosta, commander of the Third Army, has declared it to be "a faithful record of what happened in all our hearts."

Venice sleeps, wrote the poet, under an autumn sky. Not a light in the canals, no chattering of voices on the bridges, not a sound in the once vibrant air. Only at intervals the weird voice of the megaphone letting fall from above the welcome assurance: "*Per l'aria buona guardia.*" Venice sleeps in sovereign peace.

But inside the darkened houses, what dread, what lengthened vigils, what shocks of fright! Until, as winter draws near, hearts grow serene, thinking that winter's storms will drive back these demons of the air. When, one evening, a bulletin of war drives every heart into hell.

For down from the north a mighty wind of madness and plunder sweeps through the doors of Italy. A black storm of ancient enemies—Turks, Huns, Bulgars, Hungarians, Croats—nearer and nearer they come, till the earth trembles and an arch of fire stretches from the mountains to the Lagoon, and every Italian suffers on Calvary.

And the soldier of the trenches—the soldier of San Michele, of the Falti, of the Carso—standing on the heights

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so hardly won and held at such terrific cost, instead of the long hoped-for signal to advance, receives the command more cruel than death; to leave his post and withdraw before the advancing fire. He sees the enemy planting their feet on holy ground. He sees the army of refugees joining the retreat, leaving behind them all their little world. And something trembles and struggles in his warrior's heart, flames up, flickers, and goes out. His faith is dead.

In deep humiliation he plunges on, bent with agony, the barbarians howling like beasts behind him. For days and nights the heartless, desperate rout continues. He crosses the Tagliamento, passing the scenes of the early advance, when the armies had marched forth, singing, to conquer a frontier whose defenses had been thought invulnerable, until he reaches the Piave and is dragged across it with the horde. There he stands for a moment, in the mud of the river bank, his forces spent, his teeth set, his soul in torment. Hope has died out of him and faith is dead. His only desire is to find his home where he can hide himself, where he can lie down and cry his heart out. Struggling over the bank he stops again, suddenly; for a wind has struck his face, and the taste of salt is on his lips. He looks into the keen wind and wonders. What is that gleam of light far away against the sky? He strains to see. A space of water is outlined against the low lands, and the white light above it is like a cloud of incense. He cannot believe what his eyes tell him. He falls on his knees, his voice trembles when he would speak, and all the air breathes, "Venice! Sacred, beloved Venice, bride of the sea!"

Then he speaks and calls the city by tender names and rejoices that a few more steps will take him to her. But ah, no! If he moves one step farther the way will be open to the heart of Venice. The invader will be upon her.

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The soldier jumps to his feet and turns about to face the arch of fire and the roaring tempest. He feels for his bayonet and his hand-bomb. He looks into his heart for one swift second and knows that faith still lives; it wakes fresh and strong and blossoms into joy. "Enough, dogs, enough!" he cries. "Woe to him who touches Venice." And the river bank becomes a trench.

The barbarians have seen their prey shining in the lagoon, and they rush on shouting: "Forward with heads down! Attack! We are on them." But the answer is ready: "You shall not pass!" They are hurled back in the mud, and the mud grows red. "So to-day, to-morrow, and forever, you shall not pass!"

And behold a portent! While Venice has rekindled faith in the soldiers' hearts, and they stand firm on the Piave, on the Sile, on the Grappa, to the people of Venice, whom they have saved, appears a vision. The lion of Saint Mark, the city's guardian, no longer holds the book of the Evangel, but in its stead the shield and white cross of Savoy. He rests one paw upon the shield while he raises the other, showing its claw, as the bayonets are raised against the enemy along the mountains and the lagoons. It is a vision of the strong guardian of United Italy, holding up the symbol of the nation's faith.

In the Piazza



RIVERISCO! *Riverisco! Riverisco, Signora!*" A chorus of cheerful voices greets me as I turn the corner and I look up to see a group of black-shawled, bare-headed girls walking in pairs and stopping now to smile at me with dancing eyes. One of them has a pretty, childish mouth, and her dark hair, neatly coiled, breaks into little curls about her low forehead. Another has large, strong features and a hint of cynicism in the droop of her mouth, under her smile. Another has hair descending over her temples in waves of gold, like Tintoretto's Saint Catherine, and cheeks on which the color comes and goes. They all stand erect with a firm carriage, their gowns are as neat as their smooth hair, and their necks are very white under their black shawls whose long fringe dropping below their gowns lends them an air of repressed gaiety. They are the girls from the Red Cross warehouse on the Zattere, my fellow workers.

I stand and chat with them under the arcade. It is already six o'clock of a warm summer day, and in the brief hours between the close of the working day and the falling of darkness, when there will be no lights anywhere, people of all classes are strolling in the Piazza or sitting at small tables drinking syrups and tea or crowding about the bulletin which is being read aloud for those on the outer edge. We are standing beside a low arch through which one sees the gleam of

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a canal and hears the call of gondoliers. Inside the square, the monotonous movement of the strollers is interrupted now and then by a whirl of wings as the pigeons swoop down in a flock. The rattle of airplanes overhead attracts no more attention than the pigeons. Long shadows fall across the pavement. The façade of Saint Mark's is hidden behind its protective covering, but, above the wooden wall, arches and pinnacles and belfries and scrolls and leaves and haloed saints give back the sunlight. So delicately are they carved that they seem to waver with a lace-like motion against the sky.

Officers of every rank go sauntering by, their olive green or drab touched with the colors that mark their service and regiment. Sailor boys file past in their white suits, four abreast. And now another group of black-shawled girls draws near. They do not speak to these of the first group as they pass them by. Their painted faces show them to be a different type. Socially, the fringed shawl marks a single class; but something deeper than social lines, in a country where social lines cut deep, separates them from those about me. Their hair is done high on their heads in most elaborate coils and adorned with ornaments. Their skirts are so short and their silk stockings are so thin that the heavy fringe is no longer a badge of modesty but a signal to attract. Yet these girls, too, carry themselves with a proud bearing and walk with a brisk step. They do not loll about the corners, simpering and pro-

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vocative. They do not even walk with the officers in this public place. They keep together by twos and the dignity of the Piazza is preserved.

I leave the girls of the warehouse and a few steps farther on I stop to greet a famous countess just returned to Venice. She is very tall and handsome. She raises her hand high in the air as she offers it, her head does not bend, but, as she speaks, that first slight chill in her manner disappears, and you feel that she is not more dignified than she is gracious. The lines of her age may be read on her face in spite of her careful effort to conceal them. They are her service stripes. Her complexion has been successfully preserved, her features are excellent, and she radiates charm.

A few steps more and I am hailed by the sonorous voice of the American consul, a Texan of a mighty build, whose versatile career as newspaper editor, evangelical preacher, professor of economics, politician, and diplomat has given him points of contact with his fellow men as numerous as are the quick changes of his manner and the agile movements of his ample body. Wherever he goes there is a stir in the circumambient air. He is voluble and witty in his Texan Italian. There is no shadow of hesitation in his sonorous voice, as honorary titles roll under his tongue, and he bows and flatters and kisses the ladies' hands. He is always the center of attention, and a conspicuous figure he is, indeed, with his white felt hat tilted a little on his sandy head and his bland smile. He is

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adaptable to the point of genius. He has a generous heart, the Venetians say; he is big and lavish like America. This florid son of Texas loves Venice with a genuine passion. When his pealing laughter has subsided, he will speak of Venice with a tremor in his voice. Under the uncompromising realism of his surface there is a romantic dream, and Venice gives reality to that dream.

About him I find a heterogeneous group. There is an architectural engineer, a small loose-jointed man who, as one of the guardians of the public buildings, is responsible for their defense against bombs and shrapnel. I look at him with awe. What a responsibility is his! With such treasures in his care it is no wonder that he leans heavily on his cane and has a wearied look. There is a grey-haired, smooth-faced colonel whose magenta collar marks him as a physician. He will tell you, if you ask him, that the hospitals are overcrowded and that their needs are great. But he prefers to drop all that for the moment and watch the crowd of the unmaimed. There is a major of the Bersaglieri, a giant of a man with a coal-black beard, who never for an instant relaxes his military bearing. He will be off to his post in a few hours and his thoughts seem to have gone before him. There is a count of an ancient Venetian name with his French wife. These two have for their own reasons come back to open their exquisite palace, and they seem inclined to justify their presence by putting cheer into

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the people upon whom the burden of the city's tasks has fallen. They are like two butterflies flitting along the edge of the battlefield. But the God of battles will not spare them. They are soon to draw away with broken wings. And there, too, silent and retiring is the picturesque English artist who could not leave with the others because her mother was too ill to be moved. She comes to our office for cast-off papers which she rolls into wads and burns for fuel. She seems to be always shivering, even in the warmest sun. But she smiles and listens responsively and bends her flower-stem neck, while you find yourself wondering about her past. You feel that "dead springs might answer" if you questioned her. When she was younger she must have looked like the Blessed Damozel.

I accept the consul's offer of a cup of tea and join the group. A young American lieutenant from the Military Commission at Padua sits down with us, and listens to the talk, a little dazed at the confusion of tongues about him.

"The Countess T—— has returned," someone remarks. "How becoming that broad green hat is to her Titian hair!"

"Come back to repair her fortunes at the bridge table, I suppose," says another. "That clever New Yorker who taught her to play ought to have demanded a royalty on her future games. He'd be rich by now."

"She'd better be dealing her cards, for the new

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moon is almost due and she will never spend a moonlight night in Venice, not even for— One bomb has been dropped on her palace already.”

“The bomb did not explode,” the consul explained to the American lieutenant. “It fell through the house to the foundations and caused great damage. It sent out a gas that turned the cat a permanent yellow and overcame the workmen who were called in so that they fainted one after another and had to be carried off to the hospital. One of them died, I believe. The countess was *not* at home.”

“The bomb,” said the count, “was a judgment on her, so the people believe, for having been the Kaiser’s friend—a very intimate friend she was. Just why the punishment was so mild is not explained. I suppose the wind was tempered—”

“Oh!” breaks in the consul. “She is no shorn lamb. Trust her! A beautiful bird with a well-feathered nest, perhaps.—She *is* beautiful! I might explain—” he laughed mysteriously and refused to say more.

“*Peccato!*” exclaims the colonel. “It is really a shame. She is not pro-German and has not been since the war began. Yet she cannot give a thousand francs to the Citizens’ Committee for the poor Venetians that people do not say she is trying to redeem her reputation, propitiate the powers, defend her compromised loyalty, and all that sort of thing. She has been generous—very generous—though I doubt if she has made

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good the price of the wedding presents the Kaiser gave her daughter."

"But, you know, that is not what the Venetians really mind. What they cannot forgive is that she helped him to get away with some of Venice's treasures of art. I have forgotten what they were—some unimportant carved wood saints and some sixteenth-century glass, I think. *That* was disloyalty to Venice. Your Venetian thinks of Venice first and of lesser considerations afterward. It is born in him."

"It is rather more complex than that," says the count. "You would have to piece together a great many legends to explain the Countess T——. They cluster about her name."

"How different she is from that other countess, who was at your house yesterday." I turn to the consul. "*She* seems to me a truly great person. And her warmth of manner is such a contrast to the worldly graciousness of this other lady."

"Ah! yes, the Contessa Valmarana. She has stayed on through everything to work for the people. And her daughter—the loveliest of creatures—has been nursing the wounded, and her son is at the front. She has done everything and given everything. She has all kinds of ability, too. She can make a public speech as well as any man I ever heard. And for feminine charm she yields to none—unless it be to her daughter."

"Are all Venetian countesses charming?" asks the lieutenant skeptically.

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"No-o," replies the consul. "But none of them are frumps, and that is a fact!"

"It is no longer a secret," the major is saying on the other side of the table. "It is all true. Diaz went to Paris himself. He asked for only 350,000 men, one month's contingent from America. But Foch refused."

"But do you need *men*?" I inquire.

"We need Americans," he replies. "You see what it is doing for the French to have them. We need them for the same reason."

"*Ebbene!*" The count shrugs his shoulders. "We Italians were the first to insist upon unity of command."

"Yet if we had not been deciding things for ourselves when the French and English wanted us to withdraw to the Adige instead of standing on the Piave, Venice would be lost!" The major speaks with some heat. "The Turkish flag would now be flying there on Saint Mark's instead of the *gonfalone*; and those three Italian banners, where would they be?"

"Why the *Turkish* flag?"

"That was promised, they say. (Just a little extra humiliation thrown in, after the Austrian fashion.) It flies now in Udine. Yes," the major mutters in his black beard, "over our own headquarters—before Caporetto."

We are silent after that, while the band strikes up the Cavalleria Rusticana, and the crowd presses past us to be near the musicians. In a moment the center of

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the square is a solid mass of men and boys, many of them in faded uniforms and rough boots, others spick and span, all packed together around the band, listening attentively till the music stops.

Little breaths of air creep across the pavement, cooling the hot stones. A man under the clock-tower is calling out the *Corriere della Sera*. The voice goes on shouting out the bulletin—"inflicting heavy losses on the enemy, gaining notable advantages of position, and capturing four hundred and twenty-seven men, seven officers, and sixteen machine guns. During yesterday and last night our aeroplanes made important bombardments and brought down nineteen enemy planes."

As we walk away the wife of the consul tells me the story of the two American sisters who poisoned themselves in Venice when they had spent their last cent for bread. They were quite alone in the world. It was only by a label in one of their hats that the consul was able to find out where they belonged. When they had come almost to the end of their resources they decided to choose the place that they liked best in the world, go there and live till their money gave out and then quietly die. "My husband," said the consul's wife, "had to pay the expenses of the funeral. They are buried across there on that island, along with the Doges and the Patriarchs and the merchants of Venice."

A few shabby men, too old for war, are waiting with their gondolas at the Piazzetta steps. An Ameri-

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can girl and her Italian lover are stepping into one of them. They have finished their war work for the day.

The sun is setting behind the Campanile of San Georgio.

A Daughter of the Doges



HE is a direct descendant of the valiant Doge whose name she bears and from whom, one cannot but believe, she has inherited certain traits of character. Something she owes, no doubt, to her English grandmother, but she is most Italian (*italianissima*, as they say) in her feelings and loyalties. And I was often reminded, when her courage and resourcefulness came into play, of a story that is told of the twelfth-century Doge who was her ancestor—the story of the ships.

It was on the First Crusade, when he was laying siege to Tyre, together with the French Barons. The infidels were defending the city with such unexpected tenacity that the Christians were weakening. The troops were exhausted by the long siege, but were rallying to one more united effort when a report was circulated that reënforcements were coming up to the aid of the city. At that, consternation spread among the forces and the French Barons lost all hope. But the Doge of Venice spoke to them, saying; “Have no fear. However strong they may be, we shall be stronger.” “In God’s name, Sire,” replied the Barons, “it is easy for you to speak thus boldly, for you have a fleet, and we have none. If you are hard pressed you have only to retire to your ships and sail away, while for us there is no escape.” At that the Doge called his captains to him and commanded them to beach the

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ships. Now these ships were the pride of the Republic. They were manned with free men and volunteers and were called the "Galleys of Liberty." Built in the famous arsenal which Dante praised, they represented the best seamanship of the day, while they bore the proudest of insignia on their curved prows. When the Doge beheld them drawn up on land, he gave command that a plank should be knocked out of the bottom of every ship. "Are the terms fair now?" asked my lord the Doge. And the Barons had no reply.

Such a man was Margherita's ancestor; and I imagine that in the same circumstances she would have acted in the same manner. I have seen her handle more than one situation in the grand style. She acts without fear or favor, while her black eyes look straight to the core of the matter in hand. With that indescribable air of gentle breeding which shows in every line of her figure and in every sound of her voice, she can call a bluff with the same dexterity with which she puts the timid at their ease and draws out the confidences of those in trouble. Whether one saw her in the close-fitting cap and long blue veil of the Italian Red Cross or in her well-modeled dinner gown of straight and simple lines, one was always conscious of a fund of strength behind her gentleness and poise. She had "an air with her" always, but not a touch of fine airs. And if her independence and reserve suggested the pride of race, she had so much genuine feeling that, if she chose to express herself, nothing could stand in her

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way. Her sense of the fitness of things could always be counted upon; her sense of humor and her habit of apportioning her sympathies according to deserts provided many surprises and made her a mystery to some of her compatriots.

In peace or war, Margherita is one who will step into the breach. Yet she cannot be imposed upon. She has no patience with self-pity or sentimentalism, and although she is lenient toward many human weaknesses she will make no excuse for hypocrisy. She cannot endure pretentiousness or social ambition. I have seen her stiffen in the presence of persons counted important because they were relying upon their success to give them social prestige. To those who were above caring about their social position she was all kindness and affability; and she would sacrifice herself without stint for the defense of the weak against the strong. She could have scuttled a ship or drawn a sword for a point of honor. Her quick responsiveness to the instant need of things recalls another story of her ancestors.

At a certain time in the golden days of the Republic, two of the leading families of the aristocracy upon which the government depended were about to become extinct, for the only son of one of them and the daughter of the other had taken holy orders. To prevent so great a loss to the state, a daughter of the Doge came out of the convent and, with the consent of the Pope, married the young monk and bore him twelve

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children; after which the monk retired to his monastery and the novice to her convent. One of the twelve children was named Margherita. Her namesake and last descendant is still unmarried. But if loyalty has not demanded of her that she should marry for the sake of a progeny, at least the family will not peter out. It will terminate with a woman of manlike strength and great personal power.

When Margherita was a little girl, her mother moved to Florence that her children might learn the pure language of Tuscany. With their English governess in the house and the Venetian dialect all about them, their Italian was being corrupted. When the war began, Margherita was still living in the Tuscan house with its treasures brought from Venice—Venetian doors and mirrors, ancient furniture carved and lacquered in the Venetian-Oriental manner, and the tall bronze lanterns that had been in the family ever since they were taken from the prow and stern of a ship of the Pisani. But the attitude of many influential Tuscans did not please Margherita during the war. When the rich landholders around Florence suffered from an earthquake a little later, she hoped it would “give them a little understanding of what the north had been suffering.” She felt greater sympathy with the uncompromising spirit of Venice. So she closed her house and returned to her birthplace to help the Venetians. Finding the American Red Cross established there and being anxious to show apprecia-

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tion of what America was doing for Italy, she came to us and proffered her services. No doubt she saw, too, that she could help her people best by helping us. Venetian sentiment is usually on the side of common sense. Nevertheless, her first concern was always to see to it that her countrymen did their part and that we were never imposed upon. She worked with as great regularity as if she had been receiving a salary, keeping office hours with the "force," aiding us by her acquaintance with the people and by her technical knowledge of hospitals—for she had a nurse's training and had won medals in Greece, at Messina, and in the present war—and smoothing our way through many complications.

I shall never forget how she met our first adversary and overcame him. I can see her standing, tall and erect, in her straight black gown, on the edge of the historic sands of the Lido where Shelley and Byron rode and talked, beside a broad gateway where the avenue turns into a garden and curves between magnolias and oleander trees into a grove of pines and spruces. Beside her was a man in civilian clothes—an unusual sight in the war zone—a grey-bearded, stoop-shouldered, wiry little man with black, birdlike eyes. He was the official representative of the Society of Great Hotels, all of whose important members were in Switzerland for reasons which a glance at the architecture up and down the avenue sufficed to explain. This dapper gentleman bore an Italian name and the

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reassuring title of *cavaliere*, but I am sure that Margherita saw through him at a glance.

She was appealing to him in the name of patriotism to give us the use of an unoccupied hotel for the summer months, that we might establish a sea-cure for the undernourished children of Italian soldiers. The proposition struck the Cavaliere dumb—or, rather, it shocked him into garrulity. What! allow a crowd of children to occupy the *Grand Hotel des Bains*? It was unthinkable. It was a most impracticable, an unreasonable, an insane idea. Besides the rooms were stacked full of furniture from the other hotels which the army of defense had requisitioned (quite bitterly he referred to that) and if another storage room could be found, the season would be ended before it could be cleared away. And did we not know that the kitchen wing had been burned to the ground? The building was not habitable. It was out of the question. Only the hazy mind of an Anglo-Saxon, we were to infer, could have conceived of such a project.

Having failed with patriotism, Margherita tried to appeal to him on the ground of sympathy with the children. He was still unmoved. "Cavaliere," she remarked quietly, "your indifference is appalling."

"Indifference!" he exclaimed. "Do you know what we have given up for this war? How poor we have become? I tell you, Contessa, we have done enough."

At that Margherita raised herself and lifting her

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head high looked at him with her large brown eyes. "Do you, an Italian, tell me that you have done *enough* for the war? There is no such thing as enough. I will not listen to such words. I will not allow anyone to say to me that he has done *enough* for his country."

She turned away. I followed her and we started across the island to the landing stage. "Let us go back to the Admiral," she said.

I wondered if she meant to try military coercion. But I soon learned that her aim was the conversion of the Cavaliere; and she succeeded. Not, however, until he had led us through a labyrinth of deceptions, offering this and that substitute plan to placate the authorities, and when we had gone a certain distance in the direction he suggested, revealing some new obstacle to check us. There was no time to lose; the season was advancing; our patience was wearing out, when suddenly he surprised us by offering us the hotel, rent-free, and the dining-room and kitchen of the bathing establishment across the road.

From that moment he was a changed man. With the most genial good will he watched us accomplishing in a day, with the aid of fifty soldiers from the training school, what he had declared would require months. When the vast ground floor room, called the *Salle des Fêtes*, was transformed into a children's hospital and the rows of blue and white beds, brought from Venice in a flatboat towed by our small launch, were ready for their occupants; when the children

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had been selected and washed and all was in readiness, there came a military order forbidding the use of the bathing establishment because heavy guns were concealed under it. Instantly the Cavaliere came to our rescue. He led us down into the basement. "We can build a kitchen here in two days," he said. "We have only to knock out this partition—and this one. We can put a stove-pipe through this window. I will bring stoves from empty villas. With a few men from the Presidio, we can build an oven before to-morrow night." He was as good as his word, and the rapid transformation of the basement was only less remarkable than that of the Cavaliere himself.

Like so many others, he had capitulated to Margherita. He was indeed converted. He glowed with conscious pride when the King of Italy and the Patriarch of Venice and the Lord Mayor of London admired the impromptu kitchen, and he became so much interested in the pathetic children as he watched them playing on the beach or eating soup and *crema* on the vine-covered terrace that he cleared out a long sun-parlor adjoining the hotel and offered it to them as a playroom for rainy days.

One delicious afternoon, when a breeze was just stirring the leaves of the terrace roof, I saw him come face to face with Margherita. They had not met since his conversion. He was embarrassed for a moment. But she greeted him cordially and thanked him for the playroom. Whereupon his manner warmed percep-

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tibly and he began to tell her how well the children behaved in the air raids, when they were always taken out of bed and hurried down to the *rifugio* under the building. "If their mothers would take it all as calmly as they do!" he exclaimed. "The other night little Pierino stopped on the way downstairs to pick up a penny and carry it back to Sister Pompilia." They laughed together, and I heard him say: "What a great place it is for them! and how much they are improving! See that small boy running up and down to exercise his legs. He could not stand on them two weeks ago." The Cavaliere was our deputy for the rest of the summer.

We were so absorbed in our work that I had had little chance to discover anything about Margherita except her ability to manage people. But one evening, in a relaxed hour, as we sat close to our tiny fire of wet wood—in the palace, as it happened, where Margherita was born—she asked me if I knew Francis Thompson's essay on Shelley. We discussed its value as literary criticism, and, as we talked on, I began to discover the contents of her well-stored mind. Her knowledge of English literature was almost technical in its thoroughness. French, too, was like a native tongue, and she watched for the latest French or Italian book with equal interest. Yet all this was only "general education." She was in no sense "literary." Indeed, she was not always patient with literary people; and she cried out, at a later time, when D'Annun-

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zio was complicating international relations: "Italy has no need of poets! Italy needs true patriots who are willing to sacrifice themselves for their country, not their country for themselves." The weakness of the government was a sore trial to her, and once she exclaimed, "If Nardo could only be prime minister, we should get on better!" Nardo was our faithful and efficient servant in the house.

Only once in the many months during which we worked together in the same office and lived under the same roof and ate at the same table and went on expeditions in the same temperamental launch and nursed the same feeble fire on cold nights and took turns at the same pianola in a vain effort to warm our blood—only once did I see Margherita lose her calm gentility of manner and indulge in a towering rage. It was in the last October of the war, when the Italian offensive was overdue, in her opinion, and was still delayed. For several days there was no consoling her or pacifying her, and nothing could make her smile. "It is worse than defeat!" she would exclaim. "It will be our everlasting disgrace. . . . One would suppose our men could not fight. And they *can* fight. My God! we know they can fight!" Yet even in that mood I saw her carry a sick child from its bed in the Ospizio Marino, hold it in her lap all the way across the bay in the old freight launch, and deliver it into the hands of the attendant at the city hospital. After which, since Red Cross hours were over for the day and there

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was no emergency call, she walked to the opposite end of the city (I have never known a more rapid and indefatigable walker) to visit her young friend, Carlo, who was a convalescent in the Navy Hospital. She was always carrying gifts to Carlo—some chocolate from Florence, a polished leather box, an embroidered handkerchief. And the visit was always the occasion for discussion of the vital interests of the day. The play of intelligence is the best of games to educated Italians, as every reader of their modern drama knows. Conversation is more than a friendly pastime. In Margherita the love of discussion was combined with a strong instinct for action. Carlo was a writer as well as a naval officer. He was a contributor to a liberal paper, an organ of opposition to the political abuses of the day. He was an advocate of electoral and educational reform, and although he was a strong supporter of the war he disagreed with the alleged motives of certain political leaders, and he was bitterly indignant over the Pact of London. With most of Carlo's ideas Margherita was in accord; and to aid this young enthusiast to clarify his reasoning and arrange his arguments was to bridge the gulf between thought and action. In these occasional off-duty hours, she was working for the future.

During the most difficult weeks, when every day brought a new emergency, Margherita had to deal with an emotional complication which must have tried her, although it never distracted her from the work in

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hand. She was pursued by the attentions of an officer whose capitulation was not impersonal, like the *Cavaliere's*, and by no means so useful. It was an affair which required great delicacy in the handling, and for unavoidable reasons. Her admirer was possessed of inexhaustible resources, and to resist all of his methods of approach with no sign of discomposure must have called for all of her diplomacy, while she seemed to us to have never a thought or a feeling apart from our work. Cultured Italians have unfathomable minds—and we call them children!

There is a legend of the Virtues: that once upon a time, when they came together for a banquet, expecting to enjoy the most congenial of all companies, the feast was spoiled by two of the guests who were not on speaking terms and refused to be reconciled. These two were Benevolence and Gratitude.

Margherita was determined that in the work we were doing gratitude should meet benevolence half-way. There should be no making capital of American generosity if she could help it. She held herself personally responsible for the treatment of every individual American by every individual Italian. The incident of the Red Cross launch will be long remembered by the Delegate and perhaps by one or two of Margherita's fellow countrymen.

It was a genteel, graceful launch, purchased in Spezia by a major of the Commission in Rome at a

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fabulous price. When it arrived, after the usual delay of all transported things, and was delivered at the Arsenal, it was found to be so new as to its frame that it was not yet finished and so old as to its engine that it refused to budge. The kindly officers of the Arsenal provided it with seats and cushions and curtains and a plate-glass fender and repaired the engine. They gave us Beppo for engineer and Michele for chauffeur—good-natured sailor-boys than whom none could be found more lovable or more patient under the difficulties that were in store for them. Michele was slow of wit, but Beppo was a genius—and his task demanded a genius! Without that launch we could never have done our work in the islands; and without it we should never have known the full meaning of the adage, “The unexpected always happens.”

One day it would take one of us to Chioggia or Burano or Mestre in perfect form; and the next day, when some important engagement was to be made, with the Admiral, perhaps, or the Prefect or the Patriarch, it would halt in mid-canal or mid-lagoon and there it would stay; and Beppo would bury his head in the engine and emerge begrimed and oily to tell us that an hour's work would make it go or that the case was hopeless and we must signal for a rescue. And then perhaps it would remain for a week at the Arsenal while Beppo and Michele overhauled it once more and gave it a new lease of life.

Margherita believed that the Major had been

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cheated and she was determined that the culprit should be brought to justice. Many were the letters she wrote and the interviews she obtained for the purpose. Many were her colloquies with Beppo, who at length provided her with a memorandum of defects which showed that the Arsenal was replacing bit by bit the important parts of the machinery; and, in fact, by the time we had finished our work, the old Buffalo engine had been practically remade, so often had it been reënforced with new batteries, joints, gears, and cylinders. The Delegate begged Margherita to let her conscience be at rest, saying that the Italians had done nobly by us and that one offense—if it were an offense—might be allowed to pass. This Margherita refused to do until she was convinced that nobody was responsible except the Major himself; that he had trusted nobody and asked nobody's advice; and that, moreover, he was contented with his bargain. Venice needed a launch and that was the only one that could be found; and since, he said, the value of a thing depends upon how much you want it, he had no complaint to make. He was quite indignant that anyone should think he had been imposed upon. As a Wall Street magnate, he resented the implication. Margherita had sought to protect our interests, but if the Major refused to be protected—if he preferred to be cheated—what could one do?

When this same major telegraphed that he would arrive in Venice and would like the use of the launch

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for the day (regardless of what the demands of the Venice office might be) she plotted dark plots with Beppo. The Major was to have an exhibition of what we had endured from his costly engine. But Beppo, who was then both engineer and chauffeur, was overawed by the presence of the Major. If anything went wrong, his own reputation might be at stake. And of course the engine worked like a charm that day and the Major departed more than ever proud of his purchase. Beppo lamented, with Margherita, that the motor had not chosen that day to misbehave, but at least he was sure that his own behavior was above reproach.

Margherita was right. The Major had been overcharged. But it was the Arsenal that paid in the end, so that her country was acquitted. And the American had enjoyed his privilege of spending money lavishly and of justifying himself with unruffled complacency.

With true American friendliness to one's own countrymen, we disposed of the launch to the Y.M. C.A., at the end, extolling its virtues, to Margherita's amazement, and laying special stress upon the improvements added, free of charge, by the Arsenal. If it had been so costly before these things were added, what must it be worth now? we argued. And yet we were letting it go for less than the Major paid for it! When I saw it last, Beppo was still sweating over the engine and the poor little pleasure launch was carrying freight, as it had done for us, and working over-

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time. And we, watching from a gondola, would gladly have entered into its capricious moods again for the sake of the work which it sometimes hindered but more often helped. And Margherita sighed, "Oh, to go back to the peaceful days of the war, when we had only one aim, one hope, one fear, and only one enemy!"

It was Petrarch who said, "The Doges of Venice are leaders, not lords. Nay, not leaders, either, but honored servants of the people." Margherita is a true daughter of the Doges.

Nardo



SCRATCHED on the wall of an old prison, in Venetian dialect, is a legend that Giovanni or Pietro might have written, or almost any one of our friends among the people:

From the man I trust may God defend me,
From the man I trust not I will defend myself.

That is your Venetian! As for Nardo, it is the very keynote of his character.

Nardo was the guardian and ruling spirit of the house on the Grand Canal for which we exchanged the Giudecca Palace in the early fall. For thirty-five years he had been a servant in the house, and if at the time when we took possession he assumed a very grand air of proprietorship he had come to identify himself with his absent patron; and he bore his responsibilities with a sense of dignity that was entirely becoming to so scrupulous a conscience as was his. In those thirty-five years Nardo had been married and lost his wife and raised up a family of useful citizens—school-teachers and dressmakers and a soldier of the army—all of them healthy and good to look upon; and Nardo's wages had never exceeded ten dollars a month. He himself had waxed strong in self-respect and independence, while he remained a simple and respectful servant. He had that about him which made it inevitable that one's relation with him should de-

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velop a common understanding and even friendship. He was not one of those dashing handsome Italians to whose charms certain foreign ladies have been oversusceptible. Giovanni, the gondolier, was one of those—a very prince among them it would seem, to judge from the superb looks and manners and from the stories one hears about his sojourn in England in the service of a noble lady, where he guided her gondola on the Thames and whence he returned enriched with houses and lands. Nardo was of a different species. Inclined to baldness and stoutness, he wore a ruddy complexion on his round hearty face and a reddish moustache turning to white. His manner was cordial and responsive; but compared to the suavity of Giovanni, his impetuous affability was almost brusque. He had not spared his vocal chords in the service of a deaf patron until now the native softness of his voice was quite destroyed. He had a smile for everyone who met with his approval; and for others—among whom was De Angelis, the painter—a cold correctness of demeanor.

“I can do almost anything,” Nardo said one day in a mood of confidential frankness. “I am a cook and a gondolier and a gardener. I can do the marketing and keep the accounts and plan the menus and prepare the table and serve meals and make the fires and clean and decorate the house. I am an expert packer and mender of glass and china. I am something of a carpenter and a mason—I built an artificial wall to hide the contents

Nardo

of this house from the approaching invader—and—well, I can turn my hand to almost anything. But there is one thing I cannot do. I cannot learn to speak a foreign language.”

Nardo's efforts to say “doughnuts” and “pudding” were proof enough of this last contention. But for the rest he was overmodest. To see him standing erect in his broad shirt front and black suit, bending his ear to orders and assenting with quick little nods of his head was to have revealed to the eyes the quality of an understanding mind, at once versatile and disciplined. He ought to have added among his accomplishments the ability to assist the parish priest in the functions of the church of Santa Maria Zobenigo, where he carried on his devotions with so little interference with practical affairs that for many weeks we had no knowledge of his church-going habit. He ought also to have added his quality of stewardship. The tiniest silver box might not disappear from a table loaded with silver objects that Nardo was not aware of its absence and watchful for its return. When the treasures of the house were dragged from their hiding places behind the artificial wall, a certain vase failed to make its appearance. And Nardo “never slept a wink for nights” until he had found it packed safely and securely inside an oven.

Above all he ought to have added his uncanny faculty for being in at least two places at the same time. The ubiquity of Nardo is a mystery that has

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never been explained. He was always at hand at any moment to open the water-gate and help us out of launch or gondola, to answer the doorbell or telephone, to show people in or usher them away, to serve afternoon tea, to bring coffee to visitors at whatever hour. Yet he was out of the house at the same time, doing the marketing, carrying notes or messages, or crossing to the Giudecca garden—that wonderful Eden garden of flowers and fruits which belonged to the proprietor of the house. All winter long our rooms were filled with flowers brought over at some unknown hour and arranged by Nardo's skillful hands. He brought us the papers and told us what was happening in the Piazza. He set out our candles, though for him there seemed to be no such thing as bedtime, for he was up until all possible hours at night and rose at the most impossible hours in the morning. There is no doubt that Nardo, with his power of management, got the best of service from the two little maids and from the two sailors in their off-duty hours. But all these other things he did himself, and one never called upon him for anything in vain. He had time for everything and unlimited resources. One might order dinner for three and change it at the last minute to seven. Despite the limitations of rations and food tickets, there was always enough of something. Yet there was never waste; for among all his qualities his most outstanding virtue was thrift. Hunger and poverty were among the enemies he distrusted; there-

Nardo

fore with wise forethought he sought to defend himself and us against them.

The house over which Nardo held such a magical sway was like other Venice houses. It was not built around a court like the more beautiful palaces, and at some time in the growth of this crowded quarter it had been denuded of its garden. The broad hall with its black and shining pavement extends through the house from the water entrance, where the steps drop down into the canal, to the door that opens on the street. The steps are one or many according to the tide, and all but the highest are covered with oozy green sea moss. The so-called street on the opposite side of the house—in reality a narrow walk along the foundations of a small canal—approaches under a low arcade formed by the heavy beams and square wooden pillars that support the overhanging floor. In the lower hall, lighted by high barred windows, the family gondolas are kept—the black carved winter cabins, the summer awnings, the cushions, the ebony chairs, and bridges for crossing dry-shod over the wet steps. Here in former days the walls were hung with gilded lanterns for the gondolas and with arms and armor—helmets and cuirasses, swords and scimitars with polished blades, and halberds with crimson velvet shafts. It was bare and empty now, except for a clump of spreading palms in the center of the floor, placed there by Nardo as if to confront the god of war with a glimpse of festivals and gala-days.

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A short stairway leads to the low-ceilinged *mezzanine* where we had our winter quarters. Above that is the *piano nobile*, of such proportions as to suggest a life of courtly ceremonies; above that the kitchen and the servants' quarters.

Our rooms, stretching along the front of the house and opening their large sun-flooded windows on the Grand Canal, were full of life and light and movement. "Allegro" was the word that sprang to one's lips at the sight of the pink walls, adorned with white scrolls of stucco on which perched painted birds of bright-colored plumage. Over the table in the dining-room Endymion lay asleep under the protecting care of the lunar goddess. In the *salottino*, at once cozy and fantastic, a gold-framed mirror and low marble console filled the space between the windows. Beside the painted mantelshelf molded into curves was a deep recess, perhaps once an oratory, now full of plates and bowls and candelabra of ancient porcelain. Two gold-framed mirrors mounted on swinging doors projected from opposing walls and, leaving an open space between them, cut off an anteroom over whose raised floor a dim fresco of the Entombment faded into obscurity above the sheen of mirrors and the arabesques of walls and ceiling. A soft green carpet covering the mosaic floor of the room toned with the hangings of silk damask, while a black fur rug before the hearth served to accentuate the tiny fireplace and make it dominate the whole.

Nardo

In the quiet hour before dinner one November day, soon after the armistice, the Delegate sat beside the writing-table of the *salottino*, while Nardo was moving about in the next room, coming in and out with his tripping step to arrange the lights and encourage the fire, and lingering by the door now and again as if hoping to be drawn into conversation. I was curled up in the corner of the deep divan near the center of the room.

"Have you something to say, Nardo?" I asked at length, dropping my paper.

"At your convenience, Signora. I beg of you! At your convenience. I wanted to ask a favor. I know people are always asking favors of the Signora, and my request can wait."

Motioning to him that we would avoid disturbing the Delegate, I rose and passed into the dining-room where the table was already spread with its flowing cloth and set with the Nova plates and Venetian glass and old English silver of our far-distant hostess. Nardo placed a chair for me within the narrow radius of heat about the porcelain stove in the corner near the bookshelves, and standing with his hands clasped before him, lifting and lowering them for emphasis, he told me about his mother.

For a year she had been at the mercy of the invader, up near Sacile, in the conquered Veneto. And Nardo, knowing about her and waiting and hoping, had been storing away bits of food from time to time, dividing

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his own rations, and buying what he could find to prepare a store of provisions against the day of deliverance; and now he asked for permission to go to her with his little hoard. Terrible details had reached him as the people had come down in search of food and medicine in the days since the liberation. His mother had lived through it all and had borne it, they told him, with a stout heart. But his wisdom was justified. He had not trusted to prayers alone. And his savings would be manna from heaven.

"The people have been given starvation allowance," he told me. "One good woman, my mother's friend, appealed to an Austrian officer for a little more than the regulation allowed for her children; and the officer looked at her card and said to her: 'You've been stealing.' 'Stealing!' she exclaimed. 'Then why should I come to you? I have had nothing but what my card allows. And my children—' 'I know you've been stealing,' he replied, 'because you would be dead, otherwise. Nobody could live on what your card allows. You've been stealing, and now you're lying. Go!'"

"Oh!" murmured Nardo, "God will punish the offenders. But the poor victims! What will make it up to them? Oh, there must never, never be another war! And all this time, while the people were living on bits of meal, their stores were seized, their cows and oxen and horses were stolen, and whatever the army of occupation could not consume was transported into

Nardo

Germany and Austria. Their farming implements are gone. How can they begin life again with nothing? Ah! It takes the heart out of one."

It was easy to grant his request and to promise him a new gown for his mother and some flour and lard from the Red Cross stores. Then I went on through the house to my own corner room and turned on the light.

The shutters were closed, a copper pitcher of hot water stood on the washstand, lace-edged towels of soft white linen hung on the wooden rack, the books and paper on my table had been put in order; it was all clean and comely. Yet as I looked about, a sense of oppression came over me. What right had anyone to comforts and luxuries like these? In the war zone they seemed incongruous. Here was this room; the white cross beams of the ceiling glistened in the light; a gold and white bed, large and low and covered with Sardinian filet, stood upon the soft red carpet. A dark wardrobe, deeply carved, rose up against the wall beside the window which I should open later to look down past the Church of the Salute to the waters that open out into the Great Basin. In front of this window a white and gold dressing-table of curious design spread out its top behind the mirror like a great open seashell. Hand-carved and inlaid cabinets lined the opposite wall, interspersed with books and pictures. The marble mantel rested on corbels sculptured into the forms of smiling children.

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I sat down beside them on a straight white chair and shivered, thinking of Nardo's stories. And my mind wandered back to the days of the June offensive, when I had shared greater dangers and been closer to the suffering and the hardship. Again I was up there on the straight hot road that led to the fighting line. I was dashing along in a camion among the shell holes and the heaps of clothing, where the battle had just been raging, meeting the death squads with their pick-axes and seeing them at their work, and passing the long line of ambulances that brought the wounded back. Again I stood in the cream-colored villa shaded by eucalyptus trees, where the camions were driving in through the avenue under cool foliage and stopping by the garden entrance to deposit their loads of human wreckage. The pavement of the broad hall that ran through the villa was crowded with stretchers. There was scarcely room enough to pass between them in order to carry the hot milk for which the men were famishing. From the walls, covered to the ceiling with replicas of Greek and Roman sculpture, the helpless gods looked down on us while we worked, and the odor of antiseptics hung heavy among the frescoes and carved-wood moldings.

They were brought in by the hundreds every day—silent, tired, exhausted men. I had never known before what exhaustion meant. We were too far behind the lines to see the battle vim—the Arditi advancing with bombs in both hands and a knife between their teeth.

Nardo

But we saw something of the racial gentleness toward suffering, which is like their sympathy for children. "Shall I give your coffee to these German prisoners?" asked a young Italian doctor. "Ah, yes!" he answered his own question; "they are wounded, and a wounded man is never an enemy."

Ah, here in this house I was too protected and too far away. Yet, no! For in this very house the wife and children of Nazario Sauro, the martyred hero, had waited while he performed his forty exploits on the sea and under the sea, and it had not protected them from the blow that fell. Here they had bidden him their last farewell; here the news had reached them of his capture and execution, and that last letter in which he said, "Teach my sons that I was first of all an Italian, and after that a father, a husband, and a citizen." I was to see later the monument raised to him at Pola by Admiral Cagni—a simple column from the Roman ruins crossed by another shaft of ancient marble, standing on the grass in the shadow of the frowning, massive Austrian prison where he was tried and condemned. And I was to learn later the story of his mother's heroism; of how, when summoned from their home in Capo d'Istria, in order to wrest from her the proof of his identity which he had not betrayed, she steadfastly refused to give a sign of recognition, declaring that she had never seen the man. And when a serving woman, thinking to trip her, had whispered privately, "They will put that man to death at sun-

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rise," "God rest his soul, whoever he may be," she answered without flinching. "To me he is a stranger."

No, this house had not saved Sauro's wife and children, but none the less they had been protected here from the actual ravages of war. How different would have been their tragedy if the invader had entered their home and driven them out, or robbed them, if nothing worse, of all those objects of tender association that make up the visible ties of a common life! Sister Annetta's family, for example. The father was dead, and the mother and four children—his memory might have blessed them in their little farmhouse. But they were uprooted and cast out upon the winds. The clothing we had sent them yesterday would cover their bodies for a time. And what then?

Dinner was ready to be served. I plunged my hands and face into the hot water and went back into the dining-room. Margherita, whose rooms were on the more *signorile* floor above, took her place between us. She brought the Delegate a telegram that had come by airship from Trieste, and we discussed plans for sending them hospital supplies on the morning boat. We talked of many half-finished projects, and we laughed and told anecdotes; and if Nardo could not speak a foreign language the frequent smile on his face showed that he could understand one dangerously well! And after dinner the Delegate walked to the warehouse where he and his lieutenant worked to a late hour loading the supplies onto a boat that was to

Nardo

start at daybreak, while Nardo prepared a package of food for the Delegate, who was to go with them, and Margherita stood over the telephone arranging for his passage on a torpedo boat.

It was Nardo who called him before daylight and gave him his breakfast of coffee and toast and saw to it that he had all he needed for the cold voyage. And when the little launch had dashed away from the doorstep across the dark water, Nardo slipped away to early Mass and returned in time for his regular duties.

A few hours later he showed me a letter from his daughters who were begging to be allowed to return to Venice. If they could find employment, it would be permitted by the authorities. What did I think?

"Tell them to remain in Rome, Nardo, till things are readjusted here," and I gave him my reasons.

"The Signora is right," he answered. "I will tell them that we must not think of what we want. Our desires must not count. We must think of what is best for Venice."

That afternoon he set out on his journey to his mother.

A Portrait Painter

The Portrait



SAW it on my first day in Venice, and it was a strange sight to greet one in the war zone. I grew accustomed later to the surprises of Venice—the contrasts, inconsistencies, anomalies — there where the fantastic meets the real at every turn and common events take on the color of their unique setting. Incongruities ceased to be incongruous as I saw them take their place in the larger harmony; and the portrait was after all in perfect character with that old Giudecca Palace whose massive walls enclose vast spaces of silence; where the peace of centuries seems to hover like a dream, yet wherein the hand of war has entered and had its way with human destinies.

We had crossed from the Piazzetta in search of lodgings and had left our gondola at the broad steps where the landing was perilous on a windy day. Crossing the pavement to the squarely built grey stone façade, we pulled a bell whose clang reëchoed from the hollow depths of an upper floor. A fair head and buxom bosom leaned out from the balcony above for an instant. Then the door, green and cumbrous like the shutters, swung back on its hinges and we entered an empty hall of large dimensions whose farther end lay open to the garden. Bowers of roses and vines shining in the sun diverted our attention from the dark dampness of the hall and we almost failed to find the

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stairway whose wide stone steps led by several landings, past dusty doors tightly closed, to the entrance of the great salon.

The door was opened by an apparition of loveliness. Never has a brighter rose bloomed in a greyer ruin! She was a girl of seventeen, Dirce by name, dark-eyed, dark-haired, her cheeks the color of the rose-red apron she wore, a gleam in her smile that lighted her whole face and broke through the dreary dullness of the old house and scattered its lurking shadows.

The great room was shaped like a cathedral. Its nave reached back to the garden; its transept lay along the canal and turned its balconied windows toward the heart of Venice. Cathedral-like were its lofty ceiling, its mosaic floors, its straight carved chairs, its dim recesses and the shafts of light that forced their way through the rows of windows and made streaks of gold among the shadows.

The bright smile of Dirce led us across the transept and into another room of a different character. It was streaming with white light; on its ceiling Mercury and the three goddesses floated among clouds; its floor was littered with tables and chairs and easels and paints and brushes and many-colored boxes and bottles. Above this multiform and variegated confusion of art, a gaping hole in a corner of the ceiling, from which broken beams hung down threateningly, told a story of bombardments. In the center of the room

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stood the portrait of an old lady. For a moment the world held nothing but that portrait.

It was an elegant old lady, wrinkled with age, yet full of vigor; seated with folded hands, yet ready to rise and strong for action. She had been christened "La Dogaressa"; and there was that about her which accorded well with the title—her face, her figure, her attitude, the garments she wore, the design of the background—even if her cap of Venetian point had not taken on as if by the accident of its folds the shape of the traditional cap of the Doges. She was quietly and securely aristocratic, even sumptuous with her laces and brocades, yet she wore the rugged features of a race of toilers. The power to will was written on her face. However gentle and subdued, with the knowledge of long experience in her eyes, she had never learned to yield. Her look was steady and her hands were firm.

The manner of the painting revealed an infinite patience and sense of beauty in details. Her sleeves were of soft white cloth embroidered in many colors. The ivory-tinted lace about her throat was of an exquisite pattern, minute designs of thread standing out in relief from its filmy surface, delicate to the point of evanescence. A dark quilted jacket was fitted about her shoulders, suggesting homely comforts, warmth, simplicity, repose. The wall behind her was encrusted with dull gold. From her window one looked out through a jeweled curtain upon a cultivated world—

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upon a hill of houses and castles whose architectural complexities had conquered nature, except for the fleecy clouds above and the dark pines at the foot of the hill.

As I looked at her, I was thrust back six hundred years to the gorgeous, straight-laced days when Venetian women wore silks and velvets fit for queens; when a man who touched the shoulder of a woman not his wife was punished with imprisonment. How strictly the old Dogaressa must have lived! How she sat at home or moved in public functions, sure of herself, untroubled, glad that, in her, democracy was exalted to high places!

But where was I? That thundering outside—was it actually cannon? Had the safety siren sounded just now to tell us that the enemy airplanes were driven away? The portrait was unfinished. How many centuries had it stood there? Were people doing things like this in the war zone?

Opposite the entrance of the room where we were standing a door had been cut into a little chapel. On one side was the altar draped in embroidered linen and adorned with fresh flowers and a silver cross, on the other a window barred with iron framed in the Church of the Salute and its cypress trees.

As we came out of the chapel I caught a glimpse of a shaggy head disappearing through the other door. Was it the artist? I wondered. He was a youth scarcely older, I judged, than blooming Dirce, but with a

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droop of his shoulders and a drag of his slippered feet that suggested youth grown prematurely old.

"He is a soldier," Dirce whispered timidly. "He was on the Carso—in the trenches. Yes, he is the painter. His father owns this house. *Ecco!* Here comes the signorina. She will tell you all."

The mistress of the house, a signorina of some fifty summers, came toward us with a brisk, busy step. A turn of her head was a signal to Dirce and the child left the room. One saw at a glance that the signorina led a worried life. She looked tired and hard-pressed. If she presided over such a house as this it must be by the complete devotion of her days and by the labor of her own hands. Yet she spoke to us in a cheerful voice as she greeted us and led us back into the salon toward the stiff-backed chairs.

"You have seen the chapel?" she asked. "My mother was married there, and my grandmother before her. That picture you must have seen is a portrait of my aunt. Yes,"—she answered our question—"the house has been ours for generations. But the war has taken it. The war has taken everything. Ah! when will America come and end this cruel, cruel war?"

Over and over again I was to hear that same refrain, not from officers of the army and officials of the state, but from the people. Always their hopes went out to strong, young America. "But as a nation Italy is younger," I protested to the signorina. "And think of the strength and endurance of your men."

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"Ah! the new Italy was born old," she sighed. "Our young men have a heavy burden on their shoulders. If endurance would win the war! But we need something else. We need the hopefulness of America."

Dirce had brought us coffee and gone again as we sat there talking by the open window. I was learning something of the family and especially of the signorina whose heart, I saw, was empty of emotions and full of cares. An aged mother and aunt were all she had and she was loving and tending shadows. The mother was feeble and decrepit, confined to her room in a remote wing of the house, nervous and fretful and ailing. The aunt was much more alive. Indeed, there was much spice left in the strong frame of the "*zia*." She had sat for the young artist's painting; and she was no unworthy model for the Dogaressa. But how was food to be found for two aged invalids in times like these? And how was one person to be physician and nurse and housekeeper and breadwinner? For it had come to that. Their house had gone, the old debts had been paid, and they must earn money for their bread.

"I sold the house," she explained, "to a friend and neighbor who allows me to keep possession as long as the old people live. But, oh, the complications of life! By virtue of that favor I am forced to house his son—this painter, De Angelis. (You hear his voice there in the kitchen. I wonder what he disapproves of now!) And I must feed him, too (in times like these!), as

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long as he is stationed in Venice. He is attached to D'Annunzio's air squadron, and but for his father's influence (his father is one of the most famous artists in Italy) the youth would be living in the *caserma*. He ought to go back to the front. But he has no ambition. He is an idler! Oh, yes, he paints, to be sure. And D'Annunzio takes the pictures, as the right of a superior officer, and hangs them on his own walls!"

I spoke of Dirce's beauty and quickly regretted it, for the signorina threw up her hands as if to say that I had only reminded her of another anxiety.

"Dirce is the younger sister of my old faithful servant," she continued. "She was a mere baby when she came to us and I have brought her up as my own child. And can you fancy, Signora, what that has meant in these three years, with Venice full of soldiers and sailors? and she so pretty and so full of life! It is all that I can do to keep her in the house. She never goes beyond the corner. But that is not enough. If you could hear her singing in the garden! I have to forbid that, too. I am always imagining some harm that might come to her, with young officers quartered in the house. I am obliged to take them, and really they are seldom here except to sleep, they are so busy. Often they are summoned in the night, poor fellows, to go off to the front or to put out to sea. And not one of them has ever caused me the least trouble in the world. I know my fears are groundless. They are such gentlemen—you will see. And they are so very busy.

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"But this youth, De Angelis—he is about the house from morning to night. I don't distrust him in the least. I have known him since he was a small boy and I could swear he is the soul of honor. But he is lonely and Dirce is beautiful. I am anxious all the time. I cannot think what D'Annunzio means to leave him so idle. And Dirce is forgetting how to work."

A loud gun pounded at that moment. The house shook and the signorina rose to open a window. "So much of our glass has been broken," she explained, "that I must save what I can." The string of confidences had been jostled, and I learned no more that day.

"*Ebbene, signori!*" she sighed when we were ready to take our leave, "I do not know how you will like it, living in such a gloomy place. I have hardly smiled since the war began. But if you will come!—Before the war, ah! before the war!" she clasped her hands and smiled sadly, and would have gone on to recount better days, but we could not stay to listen.

"They seem to be caught in a net, these people," we said to each other as we left the house. "They may be safe from outside evils, but what possibilities inside the net!"—"Poor little Dirce! A real mother would have more confidence and less care."—"And that wonderful Dogaressa is the old aunt!"—"Ah, but the youth has made her something more than the old aunt. She has become the wife of a Doge of Venice for as long as that picture lives."—"Surely the Signorina

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must have done the youth a great injustice. After all, he painted the portrait."

As we glided back toward Venice, stripped of her gaiety and girt for war, I knew that I had seen in that portrait, inside that war-battered house shaken by the guns, the genius of the ancient race, creative still, and indomitable, even while the modern city was in arms and all her sons were soldiers.

Yet something about the whole situation made one shudder. The signorina, plain and virtuous, with no æsthetic sense whatever, standing between the artistic youth and the beautiful impulsive Dirce!

The Painter

BEFORE I saw De Angelis again I heard his voice; and again I was reminded of the old Venetians, who transformed the Roman tongue into the softest language of Italy, and whose voices, dwelling long on the tonal vowels, made conversation sound like chants. There was music in his voice and mystery in his demeanor. I had been sitting up very late one night, after we came to live in the ancient palace, in the room where we had seen the portrait. The small quantity of kerosene allowed us for our lamp was long since exhausted and my last candle had burned out. Our bedrooms were at the farther end of the long salon, and the salon was never lighted. Groping my way as best I could through the darkness, touching a bench

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or table here and there for guidance, I was suddenly aware of someone's presence. I must have paused in my astonishment, for, from the center of the room where, as I remembered, a high-backed chair stood against a table, came the voice: "*Son'io, Signora*" . . . "*Oh! Buona sera*" . . . "*Buona sera, Signora.*" He said nothing more—only the assurance that it was he, and the greeting. But his tones were modulated so that the words rose and receded like phrases of music. But what was he doing there alone in silence and darkness at that hour? I passed on wondering.

Often I heard his voice contrasting strangely with the others of the family group—for not all Venetian voices are soft music—as they sat at their meals around the kitchen table. From a corner of the salon near our door, three steps led up through a small ante-room into the kitchen; through the doors we could see the fire blazing in the great chimney-place set into the massive wall. The hearth was raised above the floor, so that one saw the burning logs and the kettle swinging on the crane, while the firelight played upon the shining vessels hung all about. The walls were covered, in times of peace, with copper and brass and pewter—graceful, long-necked pitchers; platters and trays, hand-wrought and hand-engraved; low two-handled cups and bowls; cruets and canisters; and lanterns for the prows of gondolas. Many of these things were buried in the garden now, but every utensil that the buxom cook, Pasqua, carried about with her as she

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moved from the outer kitchen where the rougher work was done to the hearth and back again was a work of art, beautiful in form and surface. Through the door one did not see the table at which they sat, but only the chimney-place, the flames and darting shadows, and the gleams of light. The kettle steamed and the fire crackled, and one heard the steps of Pasqua and Dirce when they served the others, while they all talked together as one family. And in the middle of the meal, the black and white cat, Toto, would come out to us, descending the steps with superb dignity, as if tired of family life and seeking some appreciation of her impenetrable thoughts. And while the voices of the other women rose sharp and shrill, or thin and cracked, Dirce would sound her birdlike notes (though she spoke seldom) and the low cadences of De Angelis would roll out in rhythmic measure. They spoke in Venetian—a dialect which lends itself to what Goldoni's Liar called "spirited inventions"—and often their discussions rose to a tumult. But the voice of De Angelis was always deep and musical.

For many days the youth eluded us. We caught glimpses of him as he disappeared around a corner or through a door; we saw him in the garden moving with his gliding step through the high stone gate that led into the orchard; he would gossip with the old aunt beside her lamp in a corner of the salon screened from view; he would sit on the marble balcony outside the windows, his long legs dangling from the railing,

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and when we came near he was gone. His movements were as stealthy as the cat's. He was here and there and everywhere. And then one evening, when we had fled to the balcony for a breath of air, he did not disappear as usual. He had stood still for some time looking at the scene before us when, quite unexpectedly, he lifted up his head and began to talk. He was expansive. Whatever suspicion had held him aloof, he now threw caution aside and his mind opened freely. It was the first of many talks in the hot evenings when we exchanged the details of our day's work for the fancies and projects of the boy's teeming brain. And we discussed life from every angle. But, as there was never a time when our talk was uninterrupted by the boom of guns or the flash of searchlights or the rumble of aeroplanes or the call of the watchers from the sky, so our ideas never escaped from the vast, all-embracing circle of the war.

"It is all here," said De Angelis, pressing his temples with his long, slender fingers. "The whole tragedy of Caporetto is here, fixed in my memory. I can never, never forget!"

We were leaning against the marble railing of the balcony, looking across the broad canal whose waters were only less motionless than the evening sky. Near the doorstep below us, a group of small torpedo boats, the swiftest of the fleet, rested at their moorings. Their shining torpedo shells lay heavy and inert along their slender decks. Beyond the city, flashes against the sky

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signaling the boom of cannon grew brighter and brighter as the darkness fell. And Venice lay beneath, delicate in tint and texture, like carved ivory, graceful in every line and fragile, like old lace. The sun had thrown a flush across the Doge's Palace, lit up the Campanile for a moment, and made the towers stand out like points of coral. It was gone, and the long city floating on the sea was more than ever like some ivory curio mounted on blue enamel, hanging suspended in peril of the guns.

"If I could only forget!" the youth went on. "If life could ever be the same again! But all is changed. Do you believe, Signora, that you could ever have any faith in life again if you had seen human beings fall like flies—women and children trampled into—nothing—Oh! worse than nothing—under the feet of men and beasts?"

He raised himself from the railing and stood erect while, with the dramatic power of his race, he described what he had seen. It was as if he were painting the picture with his brush dipped in all the lurid color of misery and torment. Relaxing at length, he flung himself upon the railing and sat there with his shoulders drooping like an old man's and his legs dangling as was his habit.

"Seven years!" he sighed. "Three of military training and four of active service. The best years of my life wasted on war! and I had asked so little of the world;—only to be let alone and allowed to paint."

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He was an artist in every instinct, seeing everything in pictures, and inclined to look upon the universe as having been created for pictorial effects. Descended from a long line of painters, he was Venetian, too, with the blood of ancient Venice in his veins. With every word he spoke I was aware of that older civilization that had made him what he was. He had a background of experience, an intuitive knowledge of men and things which I was sure he had done nothing to acquire. He handled subjects with a sure touch, and a worldly wisdom that staggered me. He made me feel crude and ignorant and incurably young, though I was twice his age. He held his wisdom lightly as one holds possessions won without effort. He had no serious use for his endowment. He was poor of pocket. And he knew as little how to use his intellectual inheritance as any rich man's son his father's wealth.

He was a handsome youth, with clear-cut features and a high brow from which soft hair waved back or fell about the temples. I am not sure whether his eyes were grey or brown. They seemed to change while he spoke, transmuted by his thoughts, like the waters of the lagoon when the breeze stirs them into changing colors. His hands were long and slender, with a tell-tale yellow on his finger tips.

He detested the thought of war and sought escape from its insistent presence in artistic fancies which he seldom executed. But escape was impossible and in spite of himself he followed every slightest action on

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all the fronts, locating every gun and speculating upon the significance of every event, linking his memory of Caporetto with every engagement and with conjectures about the future. Yet withal he was so unwarlike that I tried to rouse him. Was he not glad, I asked him, to have his share in the great fight for liberty? "For liberty!" he exclaimed. "What liberty? the liberty to stay at home and follow one's bent? Ah! Signora, if I could but see how the world is to be made one whit better! I know that we are resisting a foe to civilization, and that we *must* not yield. Serbia was bullied and Belgium was violated, and I should not be even half Italian if I were not ready to defend the innocent victim of brutality. . . . I am a soldier!" He raised himself as proudly as if he had not repeatedly declared that a soldier's task is work for beasts.

"But what is it doing for us?" he continued. "When I look at myself and see the heart gone out of me, and when I look at my friends and see that they are like myself, I cannot believe that life is worth the living in a world where such things as this war are possible—where they become a duty from which there is no escape for men or nations. I have been taught always that the crown of nature is human life; that personality is a sacred trust; that every individual is a reasoning soul, self-sufficient, yet only so by passing on the torch to other souls. And what have I seen up there on the Carso? Human beings are nothing, mere clods of earth. Many a time I have seen a comrade fall and,

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as the fierce fight went on, he was forgotten and his body was thrown against the ditch to serve as a stepping stone for others climbing up to the same death. That is how we hand on the torch of life, each to his brother! And I have said, looking at that mangled corpse, 'What am I, when in a moment I may be where he is now?' "

I interposed some old-fashioned words about the immortality of the soul.

"All that I know of myself is here in this body of mine," he answered, striking his breast. "What am I, What is my friend except his hopes and ambitions and desires? When my body falls these hopes and desires are at an end. My body is precious to me—it is myself. I cannot bear the thought that it should lie there scorned and disregarded of men. If I lose my arm, a part of myself is gone. And if I save the life of others—what are their lives worth to them in such a world? Do I want anyone to sacrifice his life to save *mine*?"

"They are doing it to-night," I answered.

"By no will of mine," he retorted half-angrily.

"Oh, yes, I'm glad enough to have been in it." He reverted to my question after a pause. "When it was quiet in our sector and the neighboring hill was being shelled, and I could watch the projectiles bursting, the smoke piling and soaring, and the airplanes darting overhead, and could hear the crackle and rumble and hissing and spurting, while the steady line of motors climbed up and down from the valley below, and the

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rocks cracked and split, and the red dust of the Carso was lit up so that you could not distinguish earth from blood, and the heavens were hidden. . . . Thank God I was never an officer. It galls me to be ordered about as if I had no mind of my own. And I would rather die than command other men."

At that moment, Dirce's clear voice, warbling a delicious melody, sounded through the open window. And far down the canal two songs answered each other in a weird, responsive chant across the water.

"I wonder where the signorina is," remarked the youth. "She would stop Dirce's song if she heard it. And it's the only amusement the child has. She slaves from early morning till late at night. I try to divert her and give her a little fun now and then and the signorina hates me for it. She will ruin the girl, suppressing her like that. I told her so yesterday and we have not spoken to each other since. You may have noticed that I've been having my meals alone. It's not an easy place for me—but I've got to defend that girl. I hate war, but it is war to the finish between the signorina and me. . . . And you, Signora, would have me believe that life is worth living! I believe you are endowed with generous illusions, while I see things as they are. . . . Have you read the Kreutzer Sonata?"

We ended the evening with a discussion of Tolstoi and Dostoevsky and Andreiev, while the guns pounded away without any change of motive and

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Venice grew paler and more evanescent as the night advanced.

Like so many wars of defense, the conflict between the youth and the signorina was in reality a struggle for power and for possession. It was a war for Dirce—and the youth won. After that, the first handsome officer that came along won more easily, and then another—till the lovely flower in the war zone withered and was sent away. She became a country servant, while peace brought back to De Angelis the chance to go on with his painting.

A Soldier of the Carso



O maintain that De Angelis is a typical Italian soldier would be far from the truth. De Angelis was an exception; so far as I knew, he was unique. Much truer to type was our friend, Florio Guerini, a young captain of infantry who had risen rapidly from the ranks; one who, like De Angelis, belongs to a Venetian family, but, unlike him, is every inch a soldier. He is typical because in him the gentleness and courage of his race are united in singleness of purpose; he is superior to the rank and file because these qualities are his in ideal proportions. He is a gentleman soldier after the pattern of his commander in chief, the Duke of Aosta—the aristocrat by birth, the democrat in spirit.

I encountered Guerini on one of the great days of Italy's war. The first part of the Battle of the Piave had ended victoriously but the armies were still at grips between the two branches of the river, called the Old and New Piave, when we went up in a launch through the hot, winding lagoons to Cavallino and thence by motor across the reconquered river on a pontoon bridge to the headquarters of General X——, just behind the fighting line. As we sat at lunch in a shaded villa, discussing plans of assistance for the wounded men, a tall young officer came in, bowed low to us, saluted the general, and announced that the two wings of the army had joined together, taking many

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prisoners and forcing the Austrians across the northern branch of the Piave. The message was delivered in a quiet tone of military indifference, but the joy of it shone in the officer's blue eyes. He was introduced as Capitano Guerini.

In the afternoon I heard the capitano questioning prisoners. His kindness, his fairness, his precision, and his uncompromising directness marked him as one to whom discipline is easy because founded upon self-control. It was clear that he was a favorite of the general's, and the general was a "dear father" to Guerini. It was the general who told us of the captain's heroic career on all the fronts, and although it was not easy to credit three years of such experiences to the life of this fair-skinned, fair-haired, smiling boy, yet the firmness of his mouth and the penetrating directness of his eye showed that he was no stripling. Seven wound-stripes on his arm and an ugly scar on his upper lip told their own story. But his clear eyes had escaped uninjured and his mind and body were whole. He was an ideal officer, the general told us, though he was barely twenty-three years old. He was gentle to his men to the point of tenderness. Yet none ever imposed upon him or was allowed to shirk a duty. I could see the pleasure in their eyes when they saluted him. He was clearly a generous soul who had won true affection.

Florio Guerini had escaped from Trieste, where the family were living at the outbreak of hostilities, and,

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together with his brother and a few schoolmates, had crossed the frontier in the early days of the war to volunteer in the Italian army. He had been trained for the sea, but he had said to the others: "The real war is in the trenches. Let us join the infantry." He was a born leader and they followed him. His brother had lost a leg and Florio's wounds had been serious. "I believe it was the thought of his mother that brought him through," the general said. "He never forgets her for a minute. He knows well enough what his father and mother are suffering in Austria as the parents of 'deserters.' And his sister! He carries a heavy burden concealed behind that merry laugh of his. For a long time he knew nothing of his brother—and either one of them was sure to be hanged if taken prisoner."

The general threw away his cigarette and rose from his chair. Then catching sight of Florio as he crossed the lawn, his eyes softened and he sat down again.

"That boy is like a son to me. . . . My own son was killed two years ago. . . . I want to tell you what he said to me the other day. Oh! it is only what any of our soldiers might have said, especially those volunteers who marched out at the beginning of the war against that cruel Austrian frontier. They would not have said it to their general, however. Florio treats me like a father. 'It is something, isn't it, general?' he said, 'to have known one moment of triumphant moral beauty in a lifetime. I have had such a moment;

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it is the supreme experience. It was when I was wounded for the first time. Ah! I shall never forget my rapture at the sight of my blood, flowing for Italy. "At last, I too, I too!" I cried as I kissed the blood. And then, how I longed for my mother!' "

Three months later when the kindly general died of the epidemic, Florio was by his side, and by that act of devotion he lost his share in the great advance and in the final victory.

Several times in the kaleidoscopic scenes of the war zone I saw Florio Guerini. In a soldiers' and sailors' hut on the edge of a wild sea beach, while the waves were rolling in with a roar of thunder and a grey sea of men undulated over the sand dunes, the quartet of the Chief Command played chamber music to a crowded house and there, among his men, was the capitano. We drove with him that day to Cavazuccherina, through the stark ruins of the town, along the canals where little flatboats supported, under their camouflage, the large caliber guns of battleships, and through the lacerated fields about the "Four Houses" where the battle had been raging between canals and quagmires. "It was here," said the capitano, "that our men fought for a better world. And it was here that we saved Venice."

After the armistice, on a day that plunged us back into the scenes of war, though the fighting was over, we had Guerini with us on that most cruel battlefield of Europe, the Carso.

A Soldier of the Carso

It was a grey November day. "It is well to see the Carso on a day like this," Guerini said, "when you feel its dreary monotony; though to understand its character you must see it when it is swept by the merciless north wind of winter or when these red rocks are scorched by the summer sun; when there is no escape, no shelter, no shade, and not a drop of water anywhere."

"The Carso lives," he went on after a pause, while we drove up hill after hill, through deep valleys turning sharply around the heights, and over barren plateaus from which we looked down upon the whole length of the Isonzo, upon Gradisca and Gorizia in the plain and the gorgeous mountains beyond—"the Carso lives at dawn and at sunset. Then, for a moment, the rocks are flushed with an unearthly glow of red and orange and purple. After that, the Carso sleeps."

And there it slept before us; great stretches of impenetrable red rock covered with loose stones, sharp and jagged, and Dantesque in their strange shapes and colors. It might have been the blood of the battles of all time congealed into solid rock. It seemed a place which nature had forbidden to the foot of man and, knowing that man in his folly would not be deterred by the sight of the place, had strewn it with knife-blades to warn him away. And every yard of the forbidden ground was marked by man. His implements were thrown about—helmets, cartridges, broken guns and wagons, scraps of the shelter he had raised by

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his labor, pieces of his clothing, bits of color from the badges with which he had sustained his pride, and the bones of his body. Numberless rough crosses had been raised where dead men were—not buried, for the rocks were hard, but covered with a few stones, a coat, or a scrap of iron. Sometimes his helmet and the faded colors torn from his uniform left him a pale identity between earth and heaven.

The whole region was excavated, torn by shells and pickaxes, crossed with trenches and wire entanglements as far as the eye could see. We walked up the four peaks of Mount San Michele, where the trenches intercepting one another gave one a sickening sense of the confusion, of the desperate mingling of blood, of the grim fortuity. Captain Guerini and his friend, Lieutenant Boni, were awestruck by the silence. "It is incredible!" they exclaimed. "After eighteen months of constant firing!" And now some brushwood fires in the distance—a winding procession of flames and smoke—gave us a hint of artillery action, and some shots caused the lieutenant to remark: "When they sound like that you know the enemy is retiring. It means a small victory somewhere along the line."

When we passed the wrecks of villages, their fallen buildings were hardly to be distinguished from the loose rocks of the hillsides. The one or the other might have been the foundations of some ancient civilization discarded by the ages. Yet there, in an empty town

A Soldier of the Carso

without a roof intact, smoke was rising from the fragment of a little house. Somebody had come home.

"It was down in that town," said the lieutenant, looking into grey ruins, "that my mother came when I was wounded. She had four sons wounded on the Carso. She risked everything to come to us. . . . Ah! I remember *this* spot well," as we whirled around a curve. "Just over there is a steep cliff. I made a wager that I'd gather some violets hanging to the cliff under shell fire. I won! And I sent the violets to my mother."

Down in the *doline*—round depressions which had been filled with water in some stage of the earth's formation—were rows of wooden crosses. There, and there only, had been found soft earth in which to bury the dead. But there, too, was the only protection for the living. There had been the stores of ammunition, the provisions, the dressing stations, the shelters of every kind, all massed and packed together into one small oasis on the barren hillside.

We followed the action of the troops, with Guerini's help. Up and up we saw them scale, always to find the enemy planted on a higher hill above them. Always the same handicap! Nature and man had conspired against them; yet always they held on, month after weary month, and when it seemed as if patience could endure no more, and hopes were high that the order to advance would come; to men grasping that one hope with fierce determination, a different order came—unexplained, incomprehensible—the order to

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retreat! They were dragged back in the disaster of Caporetto.

"It is holy ground," said Guerini. "It is not a place to show to visitors. But you have helped our soldiers. It is right that you should see what they endured."

We drove back to Trieste that evening against a chilling wind. There was one moment, as we descended toward the town from the overhanging heights, when the sun burst through the mist and flooded the sea below us with showers of gold. Guerini seemed lost in thought and I regretted that he was seeing nothing. But his smile quickly undeceived me as he said in his quiet way, "I cannot tell you how much I love it."

We sat and talked that evening in the spacious, glittering *foyer* of the Hotel Savoia. The Signorina da Franza had joined us—she of the dark tailored suit and the close-fitting service cap, and the freedom and confidence and efficiency of an American college girl. The daughter of a prominent member of the Ministry, young and attractive, alert of mind and body, she had brought about noteworthy innovations for the welfare of the workers in ammunition factories, while she remained a nurse in the first line hospitals. To talk with her was to have one's mind opened in new channels. It was a pleasure to watch her thoughts making their clear, clean cuts into many subjects. But to-night we were not discussing the affairs of men and nations. The day had saddened us, and we were dazed

A Soldier of the Carso

by the contrast between this motley hotel scene and the world we had left out there among those dark mountains. There, on the dreary Carso, man and nature had combined in a work of consummate cruelty. But here, man's indifference seemed more cruel than this violence, and our thought turned back to the sympathy of the night under the lonely clouds.

Looking at the capitano sitting there, so gentle and boyish for all his experience, I said, turning from him to the signorina:

"This war has not made our young heroes very fierce, it seems to me."

The capitano smiled. "Ah! Signora,"—he spoke a little wearily—"if anyone had killed flies before, he would never do it again."

He was thoughtful for a few minutes, then, recovering his usual energy, he declared with much decision:

"The war has made us better. It has made us all better."

"But the memories?" I queried, thinking of De Angelis.

"It is just that, Signora! It is what we have seen that has made us better." He touched his eyelids as if to hold the vision fixed. "We cling to the memories. The suffering is so quickly ended. One forgets it in a day. I wish you could see my mother. She goes about the house with a smile of perfect serenity on her face—our poor empty house from which everything was

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stripped! And after all that she had to endure in Austrian internment camps! We shall never know about that. Her hair was turned from black to white, and her eyes have a sunken look that tells me how deep in her heart she has hidden her troubles. But now, miraculously, her sons are returned to her and everything else is forgotten. 'I have only one wish unsatisfied,' she says, 'that everyone might be as happy as I.'

"But there *are* things"—a far-away look came into his eyes and he seemed to be looking past us, beyond the noisy room where dishes rattled and a confusion of voices rose through the smoke—"I have seen things which I pray God I may never forget. . . . Yes, our souls have grown with seeing."

He could not explain. But I could see that from having learned to love his men, through an intimate knowledge of their sufferings and their patience, he had grown to the stature of those who have taken upon themselves, in one way or another, the sorrows of the world. He was very different from De Angelis.

The Secret Charm



BLACK storm-cloud hung over Venice. As we crossed from the Giudecca the city wore a deathly pallor, as if in fear of the wind that would descend. Giovanni bent to the heavy pole with all his supple strength and the gondola sped on as never before. Yet the way was long. Every boat was seeking shelter and the broad canal was almost cleared while we were still far from the foundations which were our only refuge. The cloud was in front of us and our effort to escape seemed to be only taking us nearer to the danger, as if we were advancing recklessly to meet the attack of some stealthy and inhuman monster. Breathlessly we glided on; breathlessly the surrounding air and water waited. There was not a ripple, not a murmur; in the hush of the white light the sky hung lower and blacker. Then the blow fell. Just as we rounded the corner under the bridge and slipped into a narrow canal, hugging the wall, a torrent of wind and rain swept down upon the water, lashing it into a fury of foam. A dense curtain of rain blown into long folds and torn into shreds met the contending waves. The opposite shore was swept out of sight; the large sea-going vessels that must have been tugging fiercely at their moorings were lost to view. The gondola-ferryboat that had started abreast of us, with two old men for gondoliers, was driven far out across the bay.

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No boat of the lagoons could resist that onrush of wind and water.

Yet Venice was unshaken. Under the shelter of her foundations she no longer seemed a trembling terror-stricken creature but a mighty protecting force, immovable as a mountain. Inside her *calli* and canals the storm might have been a gentle rain, so helpless was it against the resistance of her ancient walls. . . . The city was drenched; her streets and squares and bridges were washed clean. But the wind had only ruffled the waters gently, so that they lapped the stones a little more restlessly and splashed the *palli* a few inches higher than usual. There was just enough movement to suggest a disturbance without and accentuate the calm within.

Such are the transmutations of Venice. Even when the sky is even-tempered, surprises at every turn contradict the tradition of her placidity and create, despite the verdicts of time and custom, her infinite variety. One crosses over blue and silver water, as pure as if bubbling from a spring, and enters a pool of stagnant slime. One makes one's way through dark and narrow alleys, between walls that shut out the sky, and comes out upon a view of snow-capped mountains beyond a shimmering sea and a pale blue island floating between earth and heaven.

One looks across the Grand Canal at the white Church of the Salute rising against the morning sky with such superb dignity that, for once in the life of

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the world, one must confess, the barocco style has triumphed. And then one looks down into the water under the church and there she has become a twisting, writhing dragon. Her dome is the dragon's striped and spotted body, her spire is his tail, rough and thorny and lashing fretfully to and fro. Her columns are his ribs, the coils and statues of her architrave are claws that dangle in the water. The sun reflected from two round windows under her dome makes a shiny spot on the creature's back; the bronze Virgin on the cupola is a flash of green on his tail. The long ribs of his body are grey and opaque; his skin glistens like silk.

At the *traghetto* near by an old man sits waiting in his gondola. He is lengthened out in the reflections among the dull blue piles twisted into spirals. An officer approaches and the gondolier bestirs himself. He rises—incredibly tall and slender—and the officer, smoking a cigarette and reading the morning paper, glides, for two sous, across the silk and thorns of the dragon's back. A great barge looms up, as long as the steps of the Salute, rowed by two men at the bow and steered by another at the bulky rudder. A launch comes upon the scene, thumping insistently, noisy and crude for all the white cushions inside its glass-cased cabin. And now other boats are in motion. Air and water alike feel the change; breezes are stirring; and the dragon, with the other mysterious creatures under the floating city, disappears for the day.

On a moonlight night in the late summer we

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crossed from the Giudecca in our gondola, in spite of military rules, and wound our way, at Giovanni's will, through the narrow canals. There was not a sound to break the silence, and here and there low lights, closely shaded, only added to the enchantment. It was high water and the smells were fresh and clean and salty, and now and again, as we passed under a wall, a heavy perfume of garden flowers floated out through an iron gate. We had forgotten there was a war; when suddenly, from the still sky, the siren blew and the cannon boomed and we knew there was an air raid.

"As far as I am concerned," said Giovanni, "we go right on. I know not fear. However, I am your servant, and for precaution's sake, we will seek shelter from the shrapnel that will soon be bursting around us." We continued our silent way.

"Don Carlos once said to me," he spoke in his usual quiet voice, "'Giovanni, it looks like a bad storm. Shall we brave it?'" 'As you will, Eccellenza,' I replied. 'Very well, Giovanni. We are both soldiers, you and I. Let us start.'"

We drew under the Rialto Bridge and waited; and while the cannon and machine guns roared and rattled and thundered, reverberating under the broad arch, I thought of Shylock, and of Antonio and his argosies and his "ancient Roman honour"; and I wondered that one single pound of flesh should have been worth Portia's wit and Shakespeare's genius. And it seemed to me that the Rialto and its bridge would never again

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recall the exultant "A Daniel come to judgment" and the faltering "I am content"; but that forever and ever it would resound with those deafening guns, drowning every human voice.

When the defense guns ceased firing, we came out from the black shadows into a luminous silence so deep and breathless that the heart stopped beating. Giovanni's long stroke sent us swiftly forward. Only once was the stillness broken by voices coming from some shelter or *rifugio*. Before the safety siren had sounded we had crossed to the Giudecca and alighted at our doorstep.

In war and peace, in the present as in the past, the changes of Venice are the law of its life. From storm to calm, from noise to silence, from time-enduring storms to vanishing and elusive shadows, from solitude with the seagulls to the crowd in the café—nowhere else are there such contrasts of light and darkness, of mirth and sadness, of ease and hardship, as in this city of sea changes. It has often been remarked that these contrasts are reflected in the temper of the people and they have been taken for a sign of a shifting and irresponsible character. Idlers who live by the toil of others exist in every city; and in Venice, in days of peace, they are so much in evidence that it is not strange that travelers have mistaken them for the real *popolo veneziano*. But the conditions of Venice, whose very persistence through the ages has demanded a superior intensity of purpose, intelligence of

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foresight, and patience of industry, have developed a people of extraordinary adaptability, a people capable of concentrated labor and complete relaxation, a people of alertness, of independence, and of ready wit, whose emotions are as intense as they are deep. There is no unreality in the life of Venice.

Change is the law of nature. And the deeper secret of the charm of Venice is not the pathos of beauty in decay or the strangeness of unaccustomed things that seem unsubstantial like a dream. It is the close intercourse between man and nature, here in this spot which has been reclaimed from the sea waves and held against them by sheer force of human will. It has been a contest of sharp resistance on both sides. But the struggle with nature is the only warfare that produces harmony. This is the paradox of man's life on earth—his contest with the elements is the guaranty of his peace. Here in Venice the nearness to nature is not that of the rustic who lives by what the earth produces from the seed he plants and waters by his toil. It is something quite different and teaches a subtler lesson. For here where the beauty of art has reached its greatest perfection, where the adornments of life have lent the highest grace to existence, here at every step men are brought face to face with Nature's moods, her demands are always at his door. Her smiles and frowns become his own. He is close to the sound of moving waters. A thousand colors of earth and sky are mirrored beneath his window as in a mountain lake. And

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only by eternal vigilance shall he save the foundations under him from being worn away by the persistent and unrelenting tides.

After many months on the Grand Canal in a house without a garden, when the airs of spring came down the rivers from the flowering land of Italy, I began to "babble o' green fields." To let the eye wander over countless hills and valleys clothed in their spring colors became an irresistible desire. And, choosing for the satisfaction of that desire one of the loveliest spots of the wide earth, our war work being finished, we exchanged our house in Venice for a rambling villa that clings to an olive-grown hillside above the Anio and looks across the valley at the silvery cascades and the grey town of Tivoli and up into the mountains and out across the Campagna waving its green and purple toward the towers of Rome.

It was the season when the olives are covered with a fine almost invisible blossom that casts a sheen of silver over their grey leaves, and when the soft green covering of the hills flaunts its youth and splendor against their gnarled, time-worn trunks. Purple iris mingled with cacti hang over the yellow walls. Clumps of ginestra spring out of the slopes by the waterfalls, and long, delicious vines hang down in sprays, wet and glistening—the green hair of Mother Earth. In the evening the sun turns the tree-trunks to gold, the larks and nightingales sing from far and near, and the moon rises behind the white cherry tree on the garden ter-

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race. Gillies and wall flowers and garlic-bloom nestle along the paths, acanthus leaves sprout from the columns of the old house, artichokes and lettuce and *finocchi* and tomatoes and strawberries carpet the slopes under the olives and fig trees and acacias. Great clumps of aloes festoon the garden wall. On the higher hills groves of oak trees mingle their young pink leaves with the tender green of elms and birches. Masses of cloud cling to the heights of Monte Gennaro, while all the land below is bathed in gold and a mist of bronze and turquoise and amethyst rolls up at the base of the Alban Hills.

It was Taine who said, "Give me a grand forest on a river bank, or give me Venice"; the sublimity of nature or consummate art. After a month in the Sabine Hills I returned to Venice to realize that here, if anywhere, one has both. As Taine himself said, "Here for the first time one admires not with the brain only but with the heart, with the senses, with the entire being." And not only art and nature are there, but one's fellow beings. The peasants in the hills are splendid to look upon and as picturesque as the donkeys that patter along beside them, half-hidden under their loads of trailing branches. ("Don't you want her? Take her, if you like," says a fond father, holding his little girl tightly in his arms.) But for permanent intercourse, day in and day out, the peasants of the hills are not wholly congenial, it must be confessed, to civilized man or woman. If one hungers for

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peasants in Venice, behold, there is a boat of cabbages just in from the fields. One may meet it in the morning at the Fondamenta and converse with father and son, and it may be with mother and daughter as well. There is the fisherman's family, too, who live on their boat, who sing the baby to sleep on deck under the half-furled yellow sail and after their evening meal are thirsting for companionship. One may choose these, or others. For in Venice, "close interthreading nature with our kind," one passes from the solitude of the lagoon where only the sea birds bear one company to a dinner table where the latest literature is discussed and world politics are in the air, or to the rarest of libraries—a paradise for the lover of good talk in an atmosphere of books and pictures and old brocades. From the resplendent garden on the Giudecca, where avenues of tall white lilies lead through a profusion of flowers and fruits in which the bees and blackbirds have their haunts; or that more formal garden of the Contarini Palace where roses and wistaria climb over sculptured arches of the fifteenth century and curved seats of age-old yellow marble rest in the heavy shade of drooping branches among beds of pansies and fox-glove, where the tinkle of a fountain mingles with the rustle of the waters at the foot of the garden wall—from retreats like these, one passes at once into the crowd, into the market place where the people gather, to the free soup-kitchen where women and old men and children are silent and patient or Goldonian and

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vociferous as suits their mood, or to the workshop where girls in white gowns and aprons are refashioning twelfth-century designs in lace and linen; from the populous Piazza, illuminated now since the armistice and glowing like a great festal chamber, through the broad canal where a million lights dance on the water, and into the silent places where the façades of palaces—Byzantine, Saracenic, Lombard, Gothic, and Renaissance—rise above silky shadows into a velvet sky; or into a concert hall to hear the latest music, and the oldest; to the theater or the movies, into a lighted bookshop, or a café; and after it all, one wanders back to one's house on a silent corner where all night long the waves lap the foundation walls, under the window, and the night winds freshen the air for another day. Here is the country in the city—*rus in urbe*. Here, on the edge of commodious chambers, are "the arches of the day-spring and the fountains of the deep." Here is no death, but concentrated life.

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AND for me? Nothing!" (*E per me, niente.*) The woman stretched out her hands, palms upward to show their emptiness, and sighed: "I've walked all the way from the Castello, doctor, only to hear you tell me that this boy of mine is perfectly well! And still no tickets for milk? And my five children! What do you expect a poor widow to do, doctor? Please tell me this."

"Patience, my good woman, patience!" replied the Venetian doctor, with a tired smile. "Go and thank God that your children are not ill. And remember, the Committee is already helping you, as your registration book shows. See, you are receiving—"

"Nothing, doctor, nothing at all. They pay my rent, yes, but how does that help *me*? It goes to my landlord—every sou of it to that greedy padrone! Madonna! Would you believe he would take it all? And me with nothing? And five children to feed—and even *I* can't live on air, either, imagine to yourself."

She drew her shawl about her and looked as much a picture of despair as so sturdy a creature could contrive to look. One would have said that the doctor had more need of nourishing food than she. There was not a spare ounce of flesh on his lank body, and as he glanced down the line of women and children waiting their turn outside the door of his tiny office, his eyes were unnaturally large and bright. The widow was

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of the common type—the tall figure, the large, regular features, the straight nose, the low brow, and the firm chin. But for her drooping shoulder and too shallow breasts she might have been one of the women Tintoretto painted—long-limbed and muscular and replete with vitality.

“I never have any luck, never any more!” She was talking half to herself now and half to the other women, for the doctor had turned to the next in line and she was moving away reluctantly, leading her small boy by the hand. “It’s no use. I was born unlucky. And Marietta gets two liters of milk a week for her puny little ragamuffins. They are rickety—they can’t keep anything on their stomachs. You could see by looking at my husky children that they can drink ten times as much as hers. Does anybody call that justice?”

The small boy had torn himself loose and was skittering across the square while she dragged the heels of her *zoccoli* over the paving stones and stopped to chat with a pale, disheveled young creature at the end of the line.

“Have you been to the American Red Cross?” asked the younger woman.

“*Madonna mia!* Yes,” was the answer. “Two months ago I sent in my request, all neatly written for me by Father Borlone. How beautiful it looked! And how grand it sounded when he read it to me! But they—like all the rest—they had to send someone to visit

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me and spy out everything. I didn't mind, though, for it was that nice American artist, that *simpatico americano* who used to come down to our street before the war and paint us all. Why he ever wanted to make pictures of the Campo dei Pozzi, with the washing hanging out of the windows, I never could see. But he was pleasant and kind and gave chocolate to the children. So when he came back I was glad to see him and I showed him all over, and he saw that there was nothing in the house, nothing—not a single piece of money, no food—only a few lottery tickets. And he wrote something down and said, 'I will report your case'—they always say that, and I thank them as if they had done me a favor! And then he said, 'Do not expect much, signora (he treated me to "signoras"), because two of your children are already in a Red Cross *asilo*, and there they are given a daily meal beside shoes and clothing and the best of care. That is already something, isn't it?'

"'Oh, yes, signore,' I answered, 'but only one glass of milk a day do they get, signore, while other people's children get two.'

"'Because,' he says, 'yours are so healthy they don't need it. Thank God for that.' And he goes off laughing. I am always to thank God!—when there's not a bite in the house for supper to-day. May the blessed Virgin help us!'

"You ought to be thinking about our men at the front," said the younger woman. A roar of cannon

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accompanied her words. "The blessed Virgin is protecting Venice."

"And we are winning!" cried the widow, her whole manner changing. She stepped on more briskly and disappeared around the corner.

It was as if she had gone out and closed the door behind her. For the little square with its pink and yellow walls hung with green blinds and trefoiled window-frames was like a clean-swept room, open to the sky and shut in as effectively by the shadows of the narrow streets approaching it as by doors on hinges. The houses were deserted now and the shutters closed. The only sign of life was the doctor's dispensary with its trail of suffering humanity hanging to its doorstep.

Inside the office the doctor had taken a child from its mother's arms, examined it and handed it back, saying, "I can give you some medicine." He wrote it hastily. "But your baby needs more. He must wear an apparatus that will cost—let me see—ten lire. I have no authority to give you that. Perhaps—the American Red Cross gives you the medicine—the name is here on the blank, *Croce Rossa Americana*. Perhaps if you go to them and show them—" He touched the child's legs again. They were soft and lifeless, like putty. He moved them, and they seemed without bone or muscle. "Explain to them about the apparatus. Oh, yes, somebody there will understand your Venetian. But take some one with you if you like. Your brother is on leave, you say. Take him before he goes back to the trenches.

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Let him tell your story. You are right; you ought to have been helped before. It is because you live in the country. That makes it hard for you, poor woman. But you see how it is. We have so much more than we can do inside the city."

The woman bowed her head, drew her shawl over the baby and went her way. And now it was Pierino's turn.

Pierino was an adorable, clean-faced child of six, who clung to the skirts of his elderly aunt and had to be coaxed to show his face. It was a delicate, finely chiseled little face, with soft brown eyes under a shock of yellow hair, neatly clipped around his head. His smile—when he could be got to smile—was of an unearthly sweetness that gave a fleeting life to the white transparent face and planted a flickering joy there to vanish away like a star in a pale morning sky.

He was anæmic, the doctor said. He must go to the Lido, to stay for a time in the Ospizio Marino. There was a vacancy this very day, because one child more ill than the others had been sent to the city hospital. He would write a recommendation to the American delegate; and perhaps by to-morrow Pierino would be playing on the sea beach. Would he not like that?

The doctor petted Pierino and talked with him as if he were the only child in Venice instead of one of hundreds he had seen that day. He had been working since half-past six, as was his habit, without so much as a cup of coffee, and it was now nearly noon. And

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the line moved on, and one by one they entered the door and one by one he examined and questioned and advised and cheered and admonished them, until, when it was well past the closing hour, he went off for a bite of lunch at the nearest eating place, only to start out again to the hospitals where he would continue his rounds for the rest of the day and into the night. Nobody in Venice labored more incessantly than Doctor Vivante.

The woman from the country found her brother and together they came to the Red Cross office. There was an almost frantic look in the woman's eyes when they arrived. She had dwelt so intently upon the thought of the possible ten lire and of her hungry children back in the deserted little peasant house, that her mind was confused. She showed her baby. "It will cost ten lire, the thing he must wear. But if I had ten lire, could I refuse to give food to Maria and Giovanni and Frederico? What should I do?" She seemed in terror lest we should give her the money and so create for her this insoluble problem.

Hers was an exceptional case. But systems of relief for human creatures are not always inhumanly rigid, and when these two went away the soldier's arms were full of packages and the woman held tightly clasped in her hand an authorization to the doctor for the purchase of the apparatus.

The woman from the country came and went and we saw her no more. But little Pierino came to us by

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way of the Ospizio and was our delight through all the months that followed. He was a favorite with the Delegate, who had little time to spend with the children—though whenever he went among them you would have thought he was the Pied Piper himself disguised in a khaki uniform. He had them on his knees, in his arms, on his shoulder; and nothing else—perhaps not even condensed milk—gave so much pleasure as this to the mothers or won so much gratitude from the proud dignitaries of the venerable city.

Nothing is more indicative of the nature of a people than the character of its children. And if Pierino was pale and timid; if, indeed, most of the children of his age and younger had suffered so much from undernourishment during the war that they were apathetic, at best, and, at the worst, undeveloped and diseased, there were left in Venice enough older and more normal children to represent the populace in little and to reveal its qualities.

Venetian boys are taught to manage heavy oars almost from infancy. One meets them in all quarters of the city, plying flat-bottomed boats with poles many times the length of their small bodies. One meets them out in the lagoon helping their fathers in their fishing smacks. They combine city life with the healthy freedom of a fisherman's village. There is good swimming under every doorstep, and the signs, "Swimming forbidden," are no deterrent to their youthful spirits.

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As it has been through the centuries, the girls are far less favored. From the age of eight or nine they sit at their needles and embroidery frames, and fortunate are they if permitted to work in an open court in summer and in a well-lighted room in winter. Boys and girls alike are trained to be industrious. For the most part they are overtrained. And it is the boys who make the boldest strokes for freedom.

Yet the girls do not lack spirit. When the refugees were returning from the south and the orphanage of Santa Maria del Buon Soccorso had reopened, the girls presented a Jeanne d'Arc play, prepared in exile, followed by a Masque of Cities written by one of their number. A small girl masqued as Venice—exquisitely clad, but distraught and disarrayed, bade farewell to her children, after which one city and another received them with hospitality on their southward journey, until at length the little town where they were to stay welcomed them with high-sounding phrases and promises of a generous entertainment. As the pompous words rolled forth, in the best style of municipal oratory, at every promise a little child in her brown orphan's uniform peeped with twinkling eyes from behind the curtain to tell the audience what really happened.

"We offer you gladly the fat of the land," said the child of the masque, resplendent in the city's colors and speaking in a deep masculine voice.

"They allowed us to look at their fats in the market

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when we went to walk," interposed the little brown orphan, smiling through a crack in the curtain. "We had *polenta* twice a day."

"We freely offer you bed and board," said the mayor's voice.

"He gave us beds of board, quite true," said the little brown orphan, reappearing.

"All that we have is yours."

"Yes, all that they had *to spare*."

"We are proud to share our bread with you."

"The bread of exiles is very black."

At the end of the colloquy, Venice appeared, revived and rejoicing in victory, to welcome them back to their home where hardship would be their portion no less than in the strange city, but where the spirit of friendliness would wrap them round and hold them together as in one family.

Crossing a bridge one winter day I came up with two scions of a stock to whom resistance has become the stern law of life. They were small boys, thinly clad, dirty, and ragged. A cold wind blew in through the canal and struck the bridge like a draught of ice. The younger boy pulled his coat together—it was too small quite to meet where the buttons ought to have been—and clasped his body in his arms and muttered: "I am cold—co-o-o-ld." "*You* are foolish," said the elder. "When I am cold I say to myself, 'I am warm.' And when I am hot I say, 'I am cool.' And so, you see, I never feel anything."

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Only a Goldoni could do justice to the *popolo veneziano*. For in spite of the evils of modern proletarianism, the people of Venice are as independent and amiable and facetious and quarrelsome and grandiloquent as when he created his *School of Society*. They are as devout when religion is serviceable and as practical in their sentiments; as industrious when industry is required, and as resourceful in avoiding unnecessary exertion; as cautious and disciplined and witty and logical and proud.

Already in Goldoni's time the centuries had destroyed the honorable days of the Guilds and Schools; when artists and craftsmen and mechanics, sailors and merchants and scholars, worked side by side for the general prosperity; when the rich were not yet poor of energy and when the poor were rich in freedom of opportunity and in the enjoyment of self-respecting labor; when every man had his place in an honored group, and all classes, in spite of outstanding feuds and discords, were united in their sense of mutual responsibility and helpfulness. The Republic of Venice has been charged with many crimes. Of most of them she has been acquitted; and this at least is true: that no nation has maintained a more perfect balance of loyalty and freedom or known better how to call forth the powers of a people for the aims of civilization and the common good. For fourteen centuries, during which Venice was the only city of Europe never entered by an invader, the Venetians were the

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most contented of peoples. The fruits of their united efforts are still standing, where the modern Hun was not able to destroy them. And more than that: the mark of that old civilization is still stamped upon the temper of the people.

In the great days of the Republic, all classes shared in vigorous work and in "the joyous splendor of the play hours." And in the sad days of the Austrian régime, Mr. Howells observed "a friendly equality of feeling" among Venetians of all classes and conditions; and he refuted in strong terms the time-worn tradition that the Venetians are lazy and idle. He deplored certain moral standards of the day and corruption in high places, but he found it impossible to believe that a people who could maintain the attitude held by the Venetians toward an alien government can be wanting in the great qualities that distinguish living peoples from those that have passed into history and sentiment. "Indeed," he says, "glancing back over the whole career of the nation I can discern nothing in it so admirable, so dignified, so steadfastly brave as its present sacrifice of all that makes life easy and joyous for the attainment of a good which shall make life noble."

The city of the lagoons has not escaped the cross-currents and cross-purposes of industrialism and sentimentalism from which we suffer everywhere. The people have been caught as elsewhere in a vicious circle—low wages compelling charity, abundant char-

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ity perpetuating low wages. It is not strange if they have often come to look upon charity as their right and to demand each his full share of a heaven-sent largess. Yet there are places in Venice where one might fancy that time had turned back to the days when work was a pleasure and the creation of beauty was a happy instinct. In a certain workroom where more than a thousand girls are employed, the evacuation of the city interrupted the working of designs from Gothic sculpture and Dantesque imagery and reproducing them in needle-point, while the woman in charge—daughter of a famous patriot of '49, herself a well-known writer and literary critic, and an educator of nation-wide influence—read Dante's poetry to the working girls and explained its meaning and its history. And in the Queen's lace-making school at Burano, where several hundred girls had "put up their defense" by working on right through the war—close to the mouth of the Piave and in the shadow of the batteries that protected Venice—they sat in their white uniforms under the care of a soft-mannered Sister of the church, in pleasant companionship, free from the grime and grinding of machinery, and wove exquisite tracteries into forms of beauty that match the lines of the *Ca' d' Oro* and the carvings on the walls of Saint Mark's.

We waste our sympathies on countries "bound to the past" when they possess a tradition of culture that creates the atmosphere in which these girls work. We

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can only regret that some Armenian-Americans have done what they could to destroy it by going into Venice and offering pay for cheaper workmanship and selling their debased product in a foreign market as "Venetian lace." The Germans and Austrians have done the same thing with Venetian glass. We think of the change as a detraction from the charm of our month's sojourn in Venice, when so many "bad" things are found among the works of art. We do not think of it as a wrong to the working people and a violence to their highest instincts.

Yet the instinct for beauty is not easily destroyed, and what modern "efficiency" was not able to accomplish by the war, it will with difficulty accomplish against the spiritual resistance of an indomitable people. The Venetians are slow to yield either "to God for mercy or man for gold." When the Campanile fell to the ground in 1910, they made a vow to rebuild it "where it was and as it was" (*Dove era, come era*), and those words became the watchword for the literal fulfillment of that vow and were engraved upon the medallion that commemorated its completion.

A gondolier who had been rebuked by his patron for arguing and told to be silent, replied in a low and dignified voice, "I am a free citizen of a free country, and I will speak." The voice of the *popolo veneziano* is not dead.

Isabella



HE was one of three sisters who were like dark roses on tall, straight stems. Isabella was the youngest and our favorite. Her face was rounder than the others, her eyes deeper and darker, her cheeks a brighter red, her smile more radiant. They worked for their livelihood and supported a widowed mother. But they wore hats in the street—a fact which marked them as belonging to a different class from the bare-headed, black-shawled girls with whom they were friendly but never intimate.

These three sisters had been sent away from Venice with their mother at the time of the partial evacuation and were living in a little house on the mainland near that dreary old castle, the Villa Malcontenta. In order to keep the house and not become objects of charity, they were obliged to come into Venice to find work. Every morning they crossed from Fusina in the steamboat and every evening they returned to their mother. One of them was a stenographer, another a trained accountant. But Isabella's training was not of much value at such a time; she had made glass flowers before the war. At first we found only odd jobs for her; she ran errands, tied up packages, helped in collecting measurements and assorting clothing for our twenty-five hundred small children, and came to the house out of office hours for what we called "secretarial work." She did everything

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so well that we put more and more responsibility upon her until her errands grew into important commissions and we found ourselves relying upon her more than upon the others. She was a constant delight. Others were faithful and honest and patient and industrious; she was all that and much more. She had a low voice and quiet flawless manners. She laughed at hardships and welcomed extra work. She seldom made mistakes and she was never stupid. She had pleasant little habits, too, such as bringing you a bunch of flowers or suggesting a cup of tea if you were tired. She was always turning up at the right minute to find something you had lost or to remind you of something you had forgotten. Yet she was not overzealous; she was not free with suggestions when none were needed. And she was always cheerful. Even when her great black eyes looked troubled or perplexed, you felt that her smile was just behind them waiting for release. And when she smiled, she seemed to be about to break out in irresistible gaiety. But her gay spirits were well under control. She sometimes seemed almost too self-controlled, almost too good. Yet how many rough places she smoothed! How many bothersome duties she took upon herself! And what a comfort, in such abnormal conditions, to be so sure of her sanity and understanding! One could depend upon her to do her duty and never to create a problem.

And then, just when we valued her most highly, she suddenly became our greatest and saddest problem.

Isabella

Dark lines appeared under her eyes. Her face lost its cheerful expression. Her exuberance seemed fading away. The change was so rapid it seemed to have happened almost in a day. The Delegate urged her to take a rest, but she refused. "I am so happy here," she replied. "I have not slept well lately, that is all." But the next day she was still more unnatural and that afternoon, when I thought she was listening to something I was saying to her, I saw that her attention had wandered in spite of herself. With her face turned toward me, she looked at me out of blank, unseeing eyes.

I sent for her sister and we took her home.

She did not return next day and her sisters were very reticent. She would be better soon, they said, and they seemed to discourage further questions. But I persisted until they told me that she had been worrying about her fiancé, who was ill in a Venice hospital. He had been at the front for many months and a few days after his return he fell ill of influenza, which had developed into pneumonia. She was not allowed to see him and she had brooded. I felt that they were not telling me the whole story.

From one of her friends I learned to my surprise that Isabella had sometimes shown signs of "strangeness." "And no wonder!" she exclaimed. She told me that, although Isabella, the youngest, was nearly twenty years old, she and her sisters had never had an instant of freedom. Their mother was one of those

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unconscious tyrants who control their children down to the smallest detail, only for love and concern for their welfare. Now that circumstances demanded some independence on their part, she was in a constant state of nervous anxiety about them. They had to account to her for every minute of the day. "Even when they are at home," said the girl, "they never have any fun. You do not know their mother? And of course you do not really know Isabella. She is simply full to overflowing with life and spirits. She craves a little enjoyment, and she is hardly allowed to laugh. Her mother cannot stand 'frivolity.' . . . Isabella seems to be reproaching herself for something. She has bad attacks of hysteria. She is quite uncontrollable. And afterward she sinks into a kind of lethargy from which nothing can arouse her." She was deeply troubled and I could see that she, too, was concealing something.

They called in a doctor and we sent a specialist from Venice. From the verdict of the specialist I learned what was the chief anxiety of these innocent young women. "The girl," he said, "is the purest of virgins. She has *not* been indiscreet with her lover, but she believes that she has committed what to her mother would be the unpardonable sin. That is her obsession. It is a serious case. I will see her again."

His final verdict was dementia præcox. He ordered that she be taken at once to the asylum for the insane. She was not to stay at home another day. Oh, yes, she would recover from this attack under proper condi-

Isabella

tions. But—we knew, of course, what such a diagnosis meant. We must do what we could to ward off another attack, but facts were facts.

It was the saddest journey that bright little launch ever made when Isabella lay back behind the glass window looking at nothing, caring about nothing, while her sisters and I tried to be natural, as we sped across the lagoon to the asylum. Two shimmering islands of the broad lagoon are devoted to the care of the insane—one for men and one for women. But at that time only the one for men was in operation, with a wing reserved for women. There it was, floating on the shining water, coming nearer and nearer—the same

building on an island

A windowless, deformed and dreary pile

where Byron and Shelley talked to the maniac of “Julian and Maddalo”—where they were greeted by

Moans, shrieks, and curses and blaspheming prayers.

But just then I had no thought for anything but Isabella. And when we arrived and climbed the wet steps and entered the tomb-like corridor, we were greeted by total silence. A cold, damp, and deadly stillness pervaded the place. A speechless attendant led us through empty passages and across lonely courtyards to the women’s wing. There he left us, at the entrance to a hall filled with grey-clad, wild-eyed, foolish and demented women. Their attendant was scarcely better.

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My heart sank. Could we leave her there, to become as one of these? Never! I was resolved to get her away from that place at any cost. I would defy the doctor and the authorities of Venice and appeal to the King before I would leave her there!

I was wondering if Isabella's sisters felt as I did, when I saw coming toward us from an inner room a gentle creature in black and white with a rosy, smiling face and the bluest of blue eyes. She stretched out her arms and drew Isabella to her graciously, almost timidly, with such an expression of utter kindness that the whole place changed its aspect. When she turned toward me, I recognized her as one of the good Sisters who had helped us with the children at the Lido. What a relief to find her there! The place was a refuge for Isabella, after all. I could leave her there in perfect confidence. It flashed over me that the Patriarch, who seemed to know everything as soon as we knew it ourselves, must have sent her there for Isabella's benefit; and I knew she would care for her, body and mind. We unloaded our basket of fruit and milk and left them together. Those others had ceased to be of any importance. Only, as I looked back at them, and reflected that they, too, had once been young and beautiful, my feeling of relief gave place to a deeper gloom.

The gold ball above the Dogana was shining in the sun and the Euganean Hills were pale blue against a golden sky as we crossed to Venice. Nobody spoke, not

Isabella

even our talkative sailor boy. There was no sound but the lapping of the tiny waves and the chug-chug of the engine and the occasional boom of a cannon in the distance, until, as we stood out between San Georgio and the Riva degli Schiavoni, facing those "fabrics of enchantment piled to heaven," we heard the guards on the towers calling out through megaphones their assurance of "All's well in the air." Taken up and repeated from tower to tower, the clear call rang out over land and water—*Per l'aria buona guardia*.

The city was safe. Devout souls were saying that the holy Virgin was protecting Venice. What was she doing for Isabella? I wondered as I looked up at her veiled image on the Campanile. Deluded people! Nothing was real but the booming cannon and the more devastating evil that had befallen Isabella. I thought of her lover lying ill in the hospital, knowing nothing of all this. For him, one could hope that he would not recover. But for Isabella? I thought of the good Sister. She, too, was real. Her gentle kindness was something to cling to. If her faith had led her there to minister to those miserable creatures, then blessed be such faith, however blind. But Isabella had faith, too, and she was now one of the miserable creatures. What a mixture life seemed!

The tall prow of a gondola loomed up in front of the Doge's Palace, making one of those pictures that have been painted so often by good, bad, and indifferent painters. They had been nothing but pictures to

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me before, and most of them painfully inadequate; henceforth I should always see in them something more than meets the eye.

When we sent nourishing food to Isabella, word came back that she was happier. The paroxysms of remorse, the good Sister said, were growing less frequent. She was quieter. When I went to visit her with the Delegate, she sat on a bench in the neglected garden and told us how she had broken her mother's heart. But she did not agonize over it. She was sunk in a profound melancholy. She seemed to be telling her sad thoughts to herself. Then, at some chance word, she would break into peals of laughter. That laugh which had been so often repressed—it came freely now, in long rising and falling scales, unnaturally, uncontrollably. It was the saddest of all sounds—a mirthless laugh.

Weeks passed and our work went on without Isabella. We could do things for others, but for the neediest and the most deserving we could do nothing. And when another girl whom we had trusted proved to be dishonest and had to be dismissed (she had been taking quantities of iodine from the warehouse under false pretenses and giving it to her lover, who was a chemist) life seemed more than ever mixed and a shadow heavier than war clouds hung over us. When we had closed the office and left the city recovering from its ordeal, Isabella was still inside the walls of

Isabella

that island prison, within sight of the Austrian war-ships lying captive in the harbor.

Reassuring news reached us from time to time. When she had so far recovered as to be taken away from the asylum, the doctor would not permit her to return to her mother but sent her to a relative in the country, where she remained for many months. She never went back to the unhappy house near the Villa Malcontenta. When she saw her mother again the family had returned to their old home in Venice. What that reunion entailed I never knew. Slowly she recovered until everyone said she was quite herself again. Her lover did not die, and when I saw her, on my return to Venice, she was preparing for her wedding. Her cheeks were again as bright as the roses she had brought me. Was it only my fancy that something lurked in her eyes still? That she was not quite the buoyant creature I had known? Was she really doomed, as the doctor had said? Smiling back at her with an aching heart, I wished her happiness.

A Leading Citizen



WHEN you have made your long and winding way over creeping waters between damp piles and under mossgrown bridges, you draw up at a heavy door in a high brick wall overhung with vines and branches. You ring the bell and are admitted into a courtyard. Across the court is the façade of a palatial dwelling. You enter the broad hall, pass through the building, and come out into the open country! Gardens, orchards, rows of ripening grain, arbors festooned with grapevines, and forest trees that interlace against the sky. You breathe the fragrance of the fields. The little Sister smiles at your delight and remarks complacently:

“Yes, it is really the country. Here we never see the water. We forget we are in Venice and imagine ourselves in our own dear Lombardy.”

The Lombard plain in the midst of Venice! The little waves are forever lapping the outer walls of this small terrestrial paradise. But nobody in the convent hears or sees them. The cedars and pear trees grow up still and straight to the blue sky.

You are reminded of how Paris Bardone and Palma Vecchio retained in the Venetian world of their paintings the rustic charm of their native valleys where flocks graze in the meadows and streams wind down from the neighboring hills.

The little Sisters are happy with their laces and

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their linens and their routine tasks, interrupted during these months by the care of needy children, and perhaps they do not even know that on this favored spot one of the great men of the world once lived and worked; Fra Paolo Sarpi, the scientist and philosopher and statesman whom Galileo called "father and master," the loftiest intellect of the Venetian Republic, discoverer of the greatest of the scientific laws which the following generation proved and amplified. Here stood the Serviti Monastery where he lived. Hither came the learned of all nations to submit their theories and their inventions to this man of learning. From his friar's cell went forth the mandate that broke the Pope's dread excommunication of Venice and saved her civil liberties.

The Republic was sometimes ungrateful to her sons when they were no longer useful. But Sarpi was protected and honored to the end of his long life, and, although he refused worldly rewards and remained a simple friar, devoted as always to the church in spite of his defiance of the Pope, he filled the highest offices of the state and, escaping from the assassins whom the papal nuncio sent to attack him in the narrow street where his statue stands to-day, he died in the peace of this monastery, the most venerated of the citizens of Venice.

The little Sisters know nothing of Sarpi, and the figure of the *condottiere*, Colleone, on his war horse is more familiar to everyone than that of the great

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scholar-priest. But there had come with us that day in our gondola a modern Venetian well known to everyone, who possessed some of the same traits of character met in the same combination that distinguished Fra Sarpi. As I watched him while he chatted with the Sisters I observed that his face resembled not a little the Sarpi portrait. There was the same delicate sensitiveness and the same fine, clear-cut lines and the same imaginative eye, as if the vision of a poet prompted the diligence of the scholar. And I reflected that although he would not rise to the stature of that giant of the Renaissance, he was devoting himself and his talents in the same spirit to the welfare of his people.

For this modern Venetian was a scholar, too, and an acknowledged authority in his more narrow field of specialized research. A professor of jurisprudence and member of a university faculty, he was, like Sarpi, a religious devotee and at the same time an independent thinker bent upon social and political reforms. He was a close friend of the Modernist priest who became "The Saint" in Fogazzaro's novel; and wide apart as their careers had led them these two men had natures not dissimilar. When the city was overrun with fugitives and there was danger of a panic, the professor of law went out among the people comforting, exhorting, and constraining them. Like Ugo Bassi preaching in the Piazza during Manin's Republic, he had a compelling power as well as sympathy. But he had other powers. Not even the great Sarpi is

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a more striking example than he of the mystic who is capable of infinite patience in practical affairs and devotion to details.

But Marinoni, president of the Citizens' Committee for civilian assistance and defense, was not to be found in a friar's cell during the war nor yet in a scholar's sanctum. He occupied the Opera House. Except for the audience chamber, which was piled full of sand-bags, and the tiers of boxes, which remained dark and empty, the great theater called the *Fenice* (because a century ago it rose like a Phoenix from its own ashes) was teeming with activities. In its spacious rooms and corridors Marinoni had established his committee, a complex organization which carried out vast plans for relief based on records of every inhabitant of Venice, whether at home or in exile. At whatever hour of the day one entered from the street and climbed the wide stone staircase to the first balcony, one found lines of women awaiting their turn at the windows where the subsidies were paid, or showing their tickets at the offices where limited quantities of milk and babies' food were distributed, or seeking consultation for this reason or that among thousands of special cases. At the head of the stairs one passed through a labyrinth of offices separated by temporary partitions which divided into fragments the deep-toned frescoes overhead. In one office you looked up at the flowing draperies of some stately lady of the sturdy type dear to Venetian painters; in the next room her head and

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deep breasts leaned toward you from the ceiling. A turn to the left led to the workroom, where, under the direction of Marinoni's wife, girls and women were employed to make soldiers' garments, and where a few girls of special training worked at lace-making and embroidery with as much attention to their designs as if the invader had not been thundering against the shores. A different turn led to the president's office.

It was a meager room, with two large tables and a few straight chairs for its complete equipment. In a corner by the window, behind stacks of papers, sat Marinoni at his table. And there he worked day after day with untiring zeal. The "authorities" of Venice—the admiral, the generals, the prefect, and the mayor—attended public functions and found time to meet social engagements in their official capacities. Marinoni was always to be found working at those hours. He was something of a recluse, too, impatient by nature of formalities and ostentations. Quick of thought and speech, driving straight to the point at issue, he had scarcely time for those elaborations of courtesy which make the manners of Italians so gracious and winning. His receptiveness and understanding more than compensated, and he never had anything to conceal behind pleasant speeches.

Just beyond his office, in the circular corridor surrounding the boxes of the theater, seated near a box entrance, Marinoni unfolded a project which opened up vistas to his imagination and embodied the two

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ideals that had sustained him through the war, the desire to benefit his people and the hope of a new era of international unity and peace. He had been asked by the American Red Cross for advice upon the special needs of Venice as a victim of the war. He unfolded the plan in swift words colored by the enthusiasm of the idealist and shaped with the directness and clarity of a practical mind.

In the Public Gardens, he reminded us, there had been for many years an international exposition of art for which the nations of Europe had erected their permanent pavilions. Adjoining the Public Gardens was the Castello, the poorest quarter of the city, where sanitary conditions left much to be desired even in the most sanitary city of Italy. What more fitting than that America, which had outstripped the other nations in the scientific care of children, should establish, instead of an art pavilion in the gardens, a milk dispensary and health center in the Castello? He submitted a memorandum drawn up by Doctor Vivante, the physician in charge of public hygiene, which showed by statistics the magnitude of the need and outlined with scientific accuracy this plan of improvement. Such an institution, said Marinoni, would remind the people at the tenderest point of human nature of American ideals and American generosity. It would save the Venetian children and stand as a monument to the common effort of Italy and America in combating the disturber of the world's peace. It would be a link be-

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tween the nations more potent than art—and upon such links and common interests, he declared, depended the safety of the world.

When the *Grand Hotel des Bains* at the Lido had been transformed into a summer home for undernourished children, there was a moment when it seemed as if the cherished plan must fail because the plumbing was in disorder! Venice was a dead city industrially. No materials for repairs could be procured and the one hundred and twenty children were on the spot. It was then that the mystic and theorist showed his practical ingenuity. He searched the city until he found a building from which pipes could be removed with impunity. In a few hours he had them transferred to the Lido and the situation was saved.

The necessity in Marinoni's nature that his activities should correspond with his ideal led him to see in the smallest act of coöperation between his people and the representatives of other nations an expression of the spirit that was to save the world. His scholarly work on international law is sufficient proof that he was not a sentimentalist. But he was an idealist, to whom the significance of things was always more important than things themselves. It was for this reason that he was willing to sit up all night to think out a problem for us. And it was for the same reason that his words of appreciation were always in terms of the spiritual significance of material benefits. Yet he was well aware of every detail, of the cost of every effort,

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and its relations to the immediate need. In all this he is typically Venetian. The language of their public utterances is over-rhetorical to the Anglo-Saxon mind. But apart from the rhetoric, it reveals a power of idealization combined with a very practical sense of material values.

Nothing except milk for the children pleased the Venetians more than the ambulances operating in the war zone labeled, "Gift of the American Poets." They considered that gift a tribute to the "cradle of the arts." With a pride of race that would not allow themselves or their country to become objects of charity, they could not accept without giving in return; and many were the offerings they made, individually and collectively, as expressions of their gratitude. These things were nearly always original creations, made with their hands: embroideries and lace, glass, illuminated parchment, decorated leather, paintings, drawings, *objets d'art* of every description, from the typical convent needlework to the most exquisite Venetian point, from picture frames of cardboard and handkerchief-cases of painted satin to the famous *gonfalone di San Marco*, symbol of the honors of the city—the red silk banner of the gold-and-silver lion which was carried in the old days by the Doge of Venice to the Marriage of the City and the Sea. In a room of the Municipal Council, which occupies two Romanesque palaces of the twelfth century, this gorgeous symbol was presented to the

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Delegate by the venerable Sindic, after which it was enclosed in its white five-foot box and transported to America, where a discriminating official exacted the duty demanded by the government for "manufacturing silk." Upon his own initiative, a citizen of Venice presented the American Red Cross with a painting attributed to Gentile Bellini, a portrait of the first Patriarch, which hangs in the Washington Headquarters as a gift from Italy. And the Citizens' Committee, at the instigation of Professor Marinoni, made an offering of lace and linen designed and executed in the workrooms of the *Fenice* while the guns were pounding—a symbol of Venetian industry and love of beauty as well as of appreciation of those who had come to them in the hour of peril. At the ceremony of presentation all of the committee were present and every sentiment in their speeches might have been dictated by Marinoni, for they were all expressions of his faith in "human solidarity."

It is said that Leopoldo Franchetti, one of Italy's enlightened leaders in educational reform, died after the disaster of Caporetto of a broken heart. It may well be true that Marinoni also died of a broken heart because of national events. In the confusion of the post-war period, he was caught in a tangle of conflicting elements. A practical idealist, he had no sympathy with the desire for territorial expansion, and so keen was he for better conditions for the proletariat that he seemed to the strong nationalists to be a "revolutionist."

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Actually, he was only humanitarian, determined upon a well-reasoned change to better things. He continued to work for the people, drawing down criticism upon himself in conservative Venice, where they said, "His sympathy overrides his judgment." But this scholar, with twenty-five treatises on international law to his credit in seven years, continued to act according to his reasoned ideal, and he died in the midst of the struggle. He was, they said, a victim to the overwork which the war demanded of the conscientious. But it was not quite so simple as that. On top of overwork came disappointment and disillusionment and many distressing problems which the world will never know. And his body, always much frailer than his spirit, was not equal to the strain.

On the outer wall of the *Fenice*, opposite the building which preserves, embedded in the bricks, cannonballs hurled by the Austrians in '49, a tablet has been erected to Marinoni's memory. He will not be soon forgotten. Like Paolo Sarpi, his religious zeal led him to apply his scholarship to civic needs. But he did not live, like Sarpi, to be justified by his opponents and receive the honors of a favored citizen.

The words on the tablet are these:

*Animatore infaticato ideatore geniale
Mario Marinoni
che nell' apostolato del bene
consunse la giovane vita.*

The Dama della Croce Rossa



OW be quiet, *caro*. You've talked enough. You must rest." She tucked him in and came forward to meet me. She stopped for a moment beside another cot and bent over another of the wounded, her figure revealing all its grace under the soft blue veil fastened close about her forehead and hanging down over her white skirt.

In the instant that I waited, a sudden memory confused my vision. That dark paneled room which was now a hospital ward—I had known that room in former days and I saw it now as it had been then. I saw its harmonious fittings which had made it so unlike other hotel rooms and so in keeping with the rare days I spent there. Over against the wall were the canopied beds with their red and white coverlets. In that corner had stood the mirror, under which my children kept their dolls. On the table between the windows our books were piled. And from the stone seats under the windows we had looked down for idle hours on the Grand Canal and watched the colored sails move in and out past the white peak of the Dogana.

The picture vanished and the Lady of the Red Cross was looking at me from dark, deep eyes that seemed to hold the mysteries of the Universe. She led me back among the men and as we talked to them their needless suffering became the one inexplicable mystery. From

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what pale, tired, beseeching faces they smiled at us! I could have begged them to forgive me for bringing futile gifts—pajamas, chocolate, cigarettes—to men who had given their arms, their eyes, the youth and strength of their bodies, perhaps their lives. And even while I cursed the war and marveled at their patience, my thoughts were drawn toward this young creature at my side. She was all gentleness and attentiveness to the men, who looked at her adoringly while she bantered them and treated them like children and laughed a delightful rippling laugh that must have beguiled them from their pain. Her face shone with pride as she whispered to me bits of their stories.

“Let me tell you,” she said, as we passed on into an anteroom, “about that boy there—the one I called Enrico. He is such a dear—*proprio un amore*. He has won the medal of valor and I have been coaxing him to tell me how he won it. But it was only just now, before you came in, that I persuaded him. And then, how he blushed!”

In a low voice she repeated his words: “I didn’t deserve it, Baronessina, really I didn’t. Because you know the truth is I was a little drunk—not badly, not naughtily drunk, you know, but—*inebriato*—just a little! We were firing at an enemy battery and they were too much for us. The blows came hot and heavy and our men were dropping; and we thought it was no use, the game was up, and we fell back—all except me, and I just stood there and kept on firing. And after

The Dama della Croce Rossa

a while the Austrians stopped. Their battery was silent. And while I was wondering why they didn't begin again, my officer ran up and threw his arms around me and told me that I was a hero. I had silenced that battery, and the guns were captured. But truly, Baronessina, I suppose I should not have done it if I had not been a little drunk."

"Will he get well?" I asked.

"Oh, yes, he will be back with his mother and his Mariana in a few weeks; just in time for the early harvest. He says they will need him at home and he is praying for a long *licenza*. He says over and over, 'How long do you think they will give me?' These men out of the trenches look upon work in the fields as the most luxurious idleness.—Of course," she added, "Enrico was never drunk in his life. He was only a bit excited."

She smiled somewhat sadly, and I wondered if her girlish face and fair, soft skin belied her age. Doubtless this experience of nursing the wounded had left its mark. She must have been very beautiful three years before, when she had never known a care. Indeed she was that now, with her graceful figure and her rich coloring and those translucent eyes. But there was always that sadness in her smile, as of one who has known suffering. I divined that her sympathies were as delicate as her features. She had a low voice and a deliberate speech in harmony with her poise and

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her quiet self-confidence. But for all that she was as fresh and natural as a summer morning.

She led me into a small room lined with shelves and cupboards, its chairs and tables piled high with folded garments, and introduced me to her "superior officer"—a young marchesa, who was her most intimate friend. The marchesa, who was sorting and counting, turned with a quick movement, gave us a swift glance, and broke into smiles. She was not calm and deep and mysterious, like the baronessina, but bright and sparkling and responsive. A wave of golden hair escaped from her kerchief and glistened in the sun.

"Only look at these beautiful treasures!" she exclaimed. "We have just opened the box. I was gloating over them when you came in. And such quantities! It is what we call *abondanza americana*. I have set aside these slippers and these pink pajamas (they are the loveliest of all) for a poor fellow I have here in the next room by himself." She had soon forgotten the clothing and was telling me about the *mutilato*. "He is one of the Arditi—half his face is gone—he tries so hard to talk, poor fellow!—See, here is his most precious possession" (she took a little soiled book from her apron pocket). "It is the breviary of the Arditi. It is wonderful. I must give it back to him immediately. He thinks he must have it, because he is going straight back to the front!"

I opened it and read some lines of Carducci's (an appeal to patriotism) and some words of Mazzini's (a

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plea for self-sacrifice) and some rules for a soldier's life in plain prose but full of fire.

"You know what the Arditi do?" The marchesa's blue eyes opened wide. "And just because they are shock troops and are considered the boldest, our finest youths are being drawn into their ranks. At first they were all dare-devils; many of them roughs. But not now. This boy, for instance, is deeply religious and a gentleman. He would have taken holy orders but for some difficulty in his creed. He was in a quandary about it when he was called to the colors. He has put all the ardor of his religion into his fighting. Come into his room. He would like to see you."

These two friends had known each other from childhood. They had passed the usual life of well-bred Venetian girls, spending long summers on the adjoining family estates in the Veneto. If life in Venice, with their French and English governesses, was somewhat limited, up there at their villas they had lived in the open air. As children they played in the groves and gardens and drove or walked through the country; later they played tennis and billiards, spent hours on the garden terraces reading and singing and talking, and went from house to house for the visits and amusements of their class. Now for three years they had worked together in this hospital with scarcely a respite, and there were too many shadows under their eyes. Meanwhile, Hungarians and Croats

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and Slovenes were "living like gods" in those villas in the Veneto. An escaped refugee had brought word that the baron's park had been stripped of its ancient trees and their family portraits burned in the public square of the adjoining village.

What would become of these two after the war? They talked of it sometimes, they told me later—only vaguely as yet, for the thought of the world without war was like a half-remembered dream. Of one thing they were sure; they would never go back to the old life, to resume the pursuits of elegant leisure. That might never be possible, indeed; it was more than likely that the family fortunes were ruined. They might marry, of course, but only as they chose. The day of *mariages de convenance* had gone by even among the nobility. And whether they married or not, they would go on working for their people. The desire to relieve the sufferings of the brave *popolo* had become their dominant motive, they were sure of that. They would never throw themselves into organized efforts, like the Signorina da Franza, or have a salon like one of their Venetian friends, which would become a rendezvous for political leaders. They would perhaps assist the peasants in lace-making, or do some such quiet, useful work, as many of their class had done. Whatever they did would be personal and direct. They would never be reformers.

In the hospital and out of it, in the office and in the

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Piazza—everywhere the pivot upon which the days turned was the afternoon bulletin. And now for some time the golden days of October had revolved somewhat uncertainly about it. While messages from France sent them spinning with new hope, they were disturbed by the delay of the expected Italian offensive. The ranks had been depleted by malaria, and the epidemic of influenza had placed upon the country the burden of hundreds of thousands of orphans. Venice had suffered less than other cities, but in the military hospitals fatalities were multiplying day by day. The two friends were pressed with work and worn out by its tragic incidents. And that constant listening to the guns, for any change that might mean a decisive action, was wearing on everyone's nerves. It was terrible that it must happen and terrible that it did not begin. The strain was growing unbearable.

I saw the two friends on the day of the first bulletin announcing the advance. Our house was but a step from their hospital and they had come to us for their brief noon-hour, bringing us the news in advance of its publication. As Nardo ushered them in I saw from the brightness of their faces that they knew something more than the activity of the guns had told us. "What is it?" we asked in one breath. Then they told us that the first crossing had been made to Grave di Papadopoli in mid-Piave and the ground held against counter-attacks. Nothing could stop them now. The invader was being driven back. . . .

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After luncheon, we drew our chairs into the flood of sunshine that poured through the double window, while Nardo brought us coffee. We chatted aimlessly, never touching upon what was in our minds, the tragic side of the good news, until Margherita suddenly leaned over to the marchesa, took her hands in hers, and whispered: "I believe you have a fever!" "Nonsense," she answered with a laugh. "I have no time for fevers. I am afraid I haven't time to finish this good American cigarette. I must go back to my patients."

Two days later we learned that she was very ill. She had not escaped the infection, and, exhausted as she was, she had little power of resistance. She knew nothing of the important events of the following week; and in the hour of triumph, when the victory of Vittorio Veneto had freed the nation from its ancient enemy; when the army of occupation had entered Trieste and been acclaimed as liberators; in the midst of the universal rejoicing, the young marchesa died. She had given her life for the saving of lives.

The baronessina went on with her nursing bereft of her friend, taking on her duties as *Capo Infermiera*, plodding along with a heavy heart and growing more fragile and more exquisite every day. And now her family had returned to Venice and she snatched moments of enjoyment with her sister's children. Yet

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their presence only intensified her grief for the loss of their ancestral home. It was worse than they had feared. The villa had been ruthlessly destroyed. She showed me pictures of the house and the once-beautiful park and murmured: "I feel so sorry for the dear old place, to have had such things to endure; with all its dignity, to have been so abused and outraged. It is one more victim of the war."

They could never go back to it. They must sell what was left of the estate to make up for the losses of their slender income. But all this was not enough.

Enrico was well at last. It had been a long and slow recovery and the date of his going home had been postponed again and again. The harvest was long since over and the letters of his mother and Mariana had lost their cheerfulness. But now at last he was ready; his uniform was cleaned and pressed, his boots and socks were new, his face and black hair shone, and he looked a fine figure of a man as he made his adieus to the baronessina. He did not bow low from his hips and kiss her hand, as an officer would have done. He stood up very straight, over by the door, his arms stiff at his sides, and made her a little speech, expressing his gratitude and promising her his mother's prayers.

He was to take the first train south. He walked steadily for one who had been ill so long, but he moved quickly in his excitement, and as he passed through the lower hall, which was poorly lighted, he struck his leg against a table. That was all he remem-

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bered. An explosion shook the building. When they found him in the smoke he was charred from head to foot. He was still breathing.

The accident was easily explained. A few hours before, some workmen had dislodged from the roof of the hotel an unexploded bomb dropped from an aeroplane. They had reported it at once to the director; but he, through criminal negligence for which he forfeited his position, had allowed it to be left for a few fatal minutes on the table.

The baronessina stayed by Enrico day and night. "If we could only let him die!" she sighed again and again as the doctor administered the heart-stimulants that kept the life in his tortured body. He lived—but one leg and both hands were gone, and he was almost blind.

Only the Lady of the Red Cross could tell the story of his slow return to life and the knowledge of his future. It was she who kept him from despair, telling him little by little as he could bear it. On Christmas day his cot was carried downstairs and placed beside the Christmas tree—in the room where once I had dined on such food as would have pleased the old Venetian epicure, Aretino—and I saw her hold a cigarette to his lips, between the bandages. That was his Christmas celebration.

All the sweetness of his nature remained in his poor body. When the baronessina would ask him to do something difficult he would say: "You have given me back my life. I will do anything you ask of me." So grate-

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ful was he for his wreck of a life. But he would not go back for a long time to his mother and Mariana. He clung to the baronessina, who alone in his shattered world knew him as he was.

When she recovered from her long and anxious care of Enrico, the baronessina learned that all but one of the nurses in Venice had been decorated by the Supreme Command for meritorious services in the war zone. She was the exception. The entire hospital—not the director alone—was under a cloud and she was implicated in the blame for Enrico's accident. Possibly there were those who could have prevented this injustice. But their own honors were secure, and perhaps they were thinking more of their pleasures just then. For the gay Venetians were returning and amusements had begun. An American flagship was in the harbor and there was dancing to the strains of a jazz band on board the ship and in some of the reopened houses. The baronessina declined all invitations. She was busy working out plans for a nurses' training school to which the marchesa had bequeathed her money, and if she could leave the hospital for a day, she spent the time in the region of her father's villa among the people. She helped collect the orphans in a wing of the village hospital and, as her *soldati* left her one by one, the villagers, who had been under the heel of the invader, became her constant care.

"They are so pathetic in their patience," she would say. "They lived on rations of corn-meal while the

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army had their fill and sent the surplus to Germany and Austria. Here in Venice—does it not seem a wrong toward Venice, after the ordeal through which she has passed, that people who have not been here to help her should come back now to use her for their pleasure? In the north they ask for no amusements.”

She, like Venice, had passed through a severe ordeal. And perhaps the gaiety that troubled her in the pleasure-loving city was a part of the irrepressible spirit of which one part was courage—the same spirit which animated her as a true Venetian. For she had not lost that delicious laugh of hers; and she was soon to begin a new life as the wife of a Venetian officer and the mother of children who are born to the heritage of Venice.

The Architect of Saint Mark's



IN the multitudinous splendor of San Marco we are so conscious of the work of many artists of Venice and the Orient whose separate inventions combine into this harmony of line and color that we scarcely even wonder about the unknown architect of the basic structure upon which so much decorative talent was expended. And perhaps we do not even know that there is to-day an "*architetto di San Marco*" who is responsible for the preservation of all this treasure. The cathedral is as fragile as it is beautiful and, but for the architectural engineer, Luigi Marangoni, the central dome might have collapsed and the whole building might even now be fallen in ruins as the Campanile fell in 1902.

He is a Venetian who might have stepped out of one of Titian's portraits. It was partly the charm of the man and his gracious manners and partly the combination in everything he said of expert knowledge and æsthetic understanding and devotion to his task that transformed the scaffolding which disfigures the interior of the church into a work of magic and enchantment, as he led us up higher and higher to the top of the wooden structure until we stood under the very roof. We had climbed the narrow stairway to the gallery and crossed the porch to which the Greek horses had returned from their exile, and passed through a long low room which had the appearance of

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a mediæval workshop, where men sat at large tables poring over drawings or working with delicate tools in the midst of a white dust and an orderly confusion of bits of glass and pots of color and a variety of materials used in the restoration of mosaics. A venerable gentleman with a long white beard rose to greet us; he had been director of this work for thirty years, in which time he has so perfected his craftsmanship that we look at the mosaics now without knowing what parts have been replaced. Leaving this room which seemed suspended in midair, we walked along the gallery or triforium and mounted another complicated construction of rough wood which seemed to sway beneath us. We looked far down upon the pictured scenes we had so often craned our necks to see. It was a dizzy height. We seemed to be suspended from the ceiling by an invisible thread. But we soon forgot ourselves in Marangoni's explanation.

We could see that the scaffolding which extended from floor to ceiling enclosed one of the four great piers which support the dome. Some distance above the pavement the pier seemed to be broken in two. There was a wide gap, alarming to see, until we perceived that the upper part was supported by huge cables attached to roof and walls. These massive piers, it seemed, upon which the whole mass of the structure depended, were in reality only frameworks of thin stone filled in with rubble. The cathedral was built, he explained, at a time when the artistic sense was at

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its height but the tradition of sound construction inherited from ancient Rome was lost. In order to save the building it was necessary to reconstruct the piers by demolishing them piece by piece and refilling them with solid masonry.

This work has been going on for years, interrupted by the war. When the collapse of the Campanile awakened Venice and the whole country to the danger threatening other monuments, Marangoni was recalled from Constantinople, where he was in charge of the restorations of Santa Sofia, and placed in authority over the cathedral of his native city. It was a moment of grave anxiety and the problem presented to him had to be solved immediately. The authorities as well as the people were convinced that the danger was imminent. It seemed as if the whole cathedral would have to be taken down and built again, and the problem was complicated by the unstable nature of the marshy islands upon which Venice was built. Most of the Piazzetta is a filled-in canal; what soil there is is soft and shifting and so insufficient for the support of excessive weight that many of the plans for the protection of the cathedral during the war had to be abandoned on that account. For many days and sleepless nights Marangoni wrestled with the problem. The funds at his disposal were limited, and it was necessary not only to reconstruct the piers but to repair the walls by substituting more endurable mortar for the old which was decaying. When walls had been re-

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paired in previous years, it had meant the taking apart of the mosaics and so destroying the finish put over the whole by the artist after the work of inlaying was completed. Marangoni found a way of rebuilding the piers without injury to the structure and of restoring the walls without removing the mosaics.

It is a long laborious process, and while the Venetians have forgotten that their cathedral was ever in peril except from the invading army, Marangoni continues his painstaking work. During the war he was scarcely seen and was never in the public eye. But he watched over his beloved charge with the passionate devotion which shone in his face when he talked of its beauty. Whenever there was an air raid and the population fled to this or that *rifugio*, Marangoni was always in San Marco, where water hose had been carried to the roof and even to the cupolas and every possible protection against injury had been provided for—he was always on the spot at the point of danger, ready for any emergency.

Not only devotion and technical skill but study and research has he expended upon the treasures of Saint Mark's. Enthusiasm over the inexhaustible wealth of decoration led him to show us pieces of stone which have been removed in the work of restoration on the back of which he found bas-reliefs as beautiful in design and execution as those carved on their faces. Of these he has had copies made before replacing the slabs, and seeing them in his small "*museo*" one gains

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a new sense of the abundance of artistic wealth at the disposal of the cathedral builders. Inside the basilica, as we returned from the highest scaffolding and stood close to the oldest mosaics, he explained the theories of different critics as to their origin and history and showed himself not only familiar with the opinions of others but capable of making his own contribution to historical criticism. He had worked out his own original explanations of certain problems, and when we asked him if he would not publish his conclusions, he answered that the pressure of his work left him no time for writing. "When this is finished—" he began, and, smiling somewhat sadly, he left us to complete the sentence.

During the war Venice had several moments of alarm of which the outside world was ignorant. One of the most serious was when the single aqueduct which brings water to the city burst somewhere underground, endangering the lives of the citizens and of the fifty thousand members of the army and navy in the maritime zone. Marangoni was called upon to locate the break and repair the damage. This he did before the people were aware of the gravity of the danger and of the consternation of the authorities in charge of the city. The construction of a second underground aqueduct was immediately begun, that the city might never again be brought to the brink of so terrible a disaster.

A scholar and a practical scientist, the architect of

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Saint Mark's is an idealist of the purest type. The story of his private life is the story of long years of unselfish devotion to an ideal in the form of one woman and, when personal happiness was denied him, the centering of his affection upon his cathedral. Another Venetian who represents the same typical union of practical ability with the love of beauty once said that learning alone enables us to face the changes and chances of this mortal life. And he wrote of a famous Venetian of the Renaissance words that likewise come into the mind in thinking of the architect of Saint Mark's:

"He was the direct opposite of the times in which he lived. The time was unquiet, life was agitated and intense; the soul of this patrician was calm, limpid, and pure."

But the word that comes first into my mind when I think of him is that expressive Italian word *incantesimo*. As he revealed the hidden beauties of San Marco and the fantastic operations for their preservation I could not but associate the man with his work in that word for enchantment which means something more than enchantment—*incantesimo*.

The Daughter of a Patriot



HE is not one of the decorative ladies of the aristocracy who move with a willowy grace and speak in soft cadences and laugh melodiously. She has a sturdy body and a sturdy mind, though she can converse with as much facility in as many different languages as any lady of the nobility. She gives at once the impression of great poise and self-control and balance. In her deep voice and the expression of her dark eyes, which are serious but not solemn, one detects a large reserve of strength and complete sincerity. A certain straightforward simplicity is perhaps the keynote of her character. It is the simplicity which comes of sound knowledge and a broad vision. It is the straightforwardness of one who, having looked all round a subject, can fix his attention where he will, in singleness of purpose. *Mens sana in corpore sano* is her inheritance.

Her father had seen the Venice of Manin shake off the Austrian yoke and proclaim the Republic to the cry, "*Evviva San Marco!*" He was a boy in Venice on that March 22, 1848, and he had shared the excitement which began five days before when a group of citizens broke into the prison beside the Bridge of Sighs, set free Manin and Tommaseo and carried them in triumph to the Piazza. He lived through the difficult months of the Republic when only the generosity of the citizens in offering up their private

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wealth and their small earnings prevented the sale of the treasures of palaces and museums for the support of the provisional government. He remembered the famous meeting of the Venetians in the Council Hall of the Doge's Palace when, after the defeat of Novara had left the Republic to face Austria alone, they voted unanimously to resist at any cost. And he remembered the horror of the five months' siege—the torrents of bombs, the blockade by sea and by land, the brave resistance broken only by starvation and the scourge of cholera. These memories made him all his life a citizen of those heroic days. Although he was a student of an older Venice, the interpretation of the Venice of Manin to his generation became to him a sacred duty. The fiery patriotism of its leaders fell upon him; their enthusiasm colored his writing and descended upon his daughter.

He might have done for the city of Venice in those years of the struggle for liberty what Fogazzaro did for the Valsolda. He had the same boyhood associations which made it possible for the novelist of the Veneto to preserve the temper of the "little old world" and the "little new world" in which people of all classes move across the scene speaking their soft Venetian but belonging to the hills and valleys of the mainland. Goldoni made the Venetians of the eighteenth century live in his plays, and, in the latter part of the nineteenth century, Giacinto Gallina wrote comedies in dialect which gave him enduring fame throughout

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Italy for his reproduction of the people of his day. But, although Fogazzaro belongs to the Venetian stock of the province, the modern city has produced no creative genius to give permanent form to the intimate life of the citizens of the Republic of '49. If this man who drew his inspiration from the Risorgimento could have reproduced in literature living characters drawn from among his own people he would have left us something quite different from the romances of D'Annunzio and of the many foreigners who have taken Venice for the setting of their novels. Modern Venice has her scientists and historians and critics and actors and painters and musicians, but no great novelists or poets. She has produced men who, like Manin the professor of history, combine scholarship with intense love of country and with zeal for the welfare of the people. This patriot was one of these.

He was no chauvinist; he had no imperialistic ambition for Italy; he was not working for wealth or power; he had no dreams of restoring the material grandeur of the Venetian Republic or of imperial Rome. His desire was that his country should be led by men of the caliber of those scholars of the "Congress of Science, Letters and the Arts" in which the first note of defiance was heard—men who became the apostles of freedom because they sought a free atmosphere for the development of the life of the spirit. And he remembered always the part played by the Venetians as a united whole. "It is the law of revolutions,"

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he wrote (and he was as little of a revolutionist by nature as Manin), "that he who receives the applause of the multitude in the first intoxication of victory receives their imprecations in the hour of defeat. To Manin, overcome by misfortune, the love of the people remained faithful. It is the true glory of both."

His daughter is doing the kind of public service which we call "a man's work in the world" when we mean the work of an exceptional man. She is professor of Italian literature in a venerable college, the *Istituto Superiore di Venezia*. She also holds a government position, which calls her to Rome to sit in councils of state and sends her on official missions throughout northern Italy. She has taught in country schools and city schools. She has written books with a direct educational purpose. She has composed poems in Venetian dialect and translated the poetry of Browning into Italian verse.

I think of her sitting at her capacious desk in the center of a large room facing the Grand Canal and lined with books from the floor to the high ceiling. And again I think of her in the midst of the hundreds of girls in her workroom for refugees, cheering them through their troubles and stirring their patriotism while they make garments for soldiers; or later, when they have all returned to Venice, she is reading them Dante while they make lace from patterns suggested by his poetry, or she is telling them tales of myth and legend while they reproduce with their needles the

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carvings on the walls of Saint Mark's. Whether occupied with her books in that simple and spacious and orderly library or trying to put some light into the lives of those working-girls or moving about like a busy American, I think of her always as the embodiment of energy and vitality, with an enormous capacity for work.

She has written a book for girls which, starting with the modest aim of being a help to teachers, is in reality an exhaustive treatise on the art of life. It is a compendium of the wisdom of the ages, showing familiarity with the philosophers and poets and moral teachers of all times, yet impressed with her own individuality and the firmness of her own convictions. It is clearly based on the belief of Socrates that "there is no such thing as a detail." But it does not stop with details; it deals with the fundamental principles of ethics and with philosophical interpretations of thought and action. That the mind and the body must work together; that life is good if we know how to make good use of it and the world is beautiful if we know how to see its beauty, and that in order to see it we must trample upon our egoism; that nobody can harm us if we are right with ourselves; that it is cowardly to blame our actions on inheritance or environment when we know to what an extent we are free to alter our environment, to control our moods and even our health; that liberality toward others and severity toward ourself is the golden rule

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of life; that the intelligence will not grow by forced education but only by learning with enjoyment; that nothing is worth while which has not cost us effort; that an orderly house and nourishing food and open windows and at least one bath a day are the very necessities of the soul;—these are some of the simple tenets which she upholds on high authority and drives home forcibly. Her style is vivacious and natural; she tells a story well and is ready with apt illustrations. She writes as she talks, with sure conviction, yet with balance and liberality.

She is married to a man who has the same zeal for education and the same idea of working for the masses through the individual. He has concentrated his interest upon the Italians in America. He directs a Dante Alighieri Society in a populous Italian settlement in the hope that while his fellow countrymen become good Americans they may not lose the culture of their Latin heritage.

While she continues to lecture to advanced students of Italian literature, she devotes a large amount of her energy to the improvement of the public schools all over Italy. She has had an important part in the well-known "reform of Gentile" which is not only combating the illiteracy of the south, aiming to plant a schoolhouse on every mule-trail in the mountains of Calabria, but is undertaking to transform every primary school and every secondary school in the entire country, substituting new methods of natural develop-

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ment and spontaneous self-expression for the traditional habits of conformity to conventional and artificial standards. In her report on the books used in primary schools prepared for the Commission, which, out of nearly two thousand, retained only thirty-two as "worthy of commendation for their artistic and didactic value," she reveals the qualities of her character combined with critical acumen. She read the books at great pressure, keeping them beside her day and night, reading them while she ate her meals and while she walked in the streets, poring over them and making notes at all hours and in all places. Convinced that only real talent and the sincerity which is the basis of art should go into the making of books for children she is scandalized at the shallow artificiality, the falsity and triteness of most of them, which represent children as either all black or all white and are full of false ideas of misery unrelieved or happiness unassailable, of sentimentality and hypocrisy. In her résumé, which is deliciously funny and bitingly satirical and solemnly earnest, she throws the feelings of authors and publishers to the winds and strikes fearlessly at the root of the evil. She pleads for common sense, which is sincerity, for sincerity which is truth, for truth which is the first requisite, æsthetic or moral. She is not trying to make over text-books in the interest of any political party or of any national creed, but in the interest of truth and decency, of sound principles and a sense of proportion. She goes into the

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subtleties of the assumptions underlying the anecdotes and sentiments offered as reading lessons—the frequent assumption (for a race of sailors) that the sea is to be feared and dreaded, the implication (for an agricultural community) that the life of a farmer is lacking in nobility, the conventional description of the model child who first dresses himself, *then* washes his face and hands, kisses mother, and hurries off to school. “It is not thus,” she says, “that a new generation of Italians will be raised up to disprove the accusation of uncleanness which rests upon our people.” She is equally troubled by the inadequate renderings of the poets into prose and the lack of any literary quality in the verses for children. She is especially indignant over the way in which children are fed upon prettiness and pettiness, from the titles to the end. “In our titles we have all the forms of the conjugation of the verb ‘to love.’ We have growing things *ad nauseam*,—Seeds, Buds, Blossoms, First Flowers, First Flowerings, Flowers of the Field, Flowers of Spring, Flowers of the Soul, Birds on Flowers, Bees and Flowers, Gardens, The Garden of the Mind,—and variations on light *ad infinitum*—Aurora, Young Aurora, Dawn, First Light, Toward the Light, Light and Life, The Light which Rises, First Rays, Rays of Light.” She proceeds to the subjects, showing them narrowed to the classroom when they might have taken themes as vast as life itself. She criticizes the writers for ignoring the perspicacity of a child—for telling him things

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which he knows by instinct or things the falsity of which he cannot but recognize. She condemns them because they are incapable of offering to children the elements of grandeur and simplicity which appeal to innocent minds; "they are without art or inspiration or humanity."

The idea underlying this reform of the schools lays great stress upon the æsthetic sense. To cultivate the habit of observation and of clear expression in drawing and writing is made the foundation of the earliest education. This Venetian woman is not only in sympathy with that idea as a theory; she has the artistic instinct of her race, as one must conclude from seeing the needlework made in the workrooms under her direction. She has encouraged originality; the work is not copied from traditional styles; it is unique and of great beauty. Knowing how much second-class work is constantly sold to American tourists, I learned with chagrin that these works of art were all destined for a city in South America. I failed in my effort to purchase a single example; practical, as ever, she was filling orders of cash value while she cultivated the fingers and enlightened the minds of her girls.

Her activities during the war illustrate her versatility. In the general discouragement after Caporetto, she went to the front disguised as a villager with a tray of trinkets strapped to her shoulder, and as she sold the trinkets, reserving the money for the Red Cross, she conversed with the men in the language of

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the people, enlivened them and amused them, studied their morale and took note of their condition. She brought out a volume of her father's unpublished work in order that the ideals of the generation before them might encourage the generation at war. After the armistice, when traveling was difficult, she visited the schools of Istria to discover the inclination of the inhabitants. In one school she asked the Croatian teacher if the children could sing the national hymn of Italy. "Oh, no!" he replied. "They do not know that." Seeing some surprise on the face of a child who had overheard, she turned to the schoolroom and asked how many of them could sing Mameli's Hymn. Many hands went up and, at a signal from her, most of the children in the room rose to their feet and sang it in chorus from beginning to end.

"You see," she said to the teacher, "they have learned it in their homes."

What her solution of the Adriatic question would have been it is not necessary to inquire. Doubtless she could not have squared the facts with her ideals in the complication of the problem, for sympathy with Italians who are "oppressed" was born in her blood, but also the desire that all people should be "free," whether Croats or Tyrolese or Italians, was equally her heritage.

However that may be, a woman of her character and ability, her scholarship and humanitarianism and artistic sense, her idealism combined with concern for

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the practical affairs of daily life, is enough to silence once for all the lamentations of those who wail that "the Venetians are no more." To be able to compose so delicate a thing as her dialect poem on the Cathedral of San Marco and to have the energy to carry on so many kinds of work at the same time without any air of strain or worry or overwork is to furnish proof enough that the vitality which Molmenti recognizes in his people is not always unaccompanied by the ability to carry on the work of every day with patient endurance.

Her father defends the Venetians of Manin's republic from the charge of exclusiveness—from the charge that the cry "*Evviva San Marco*" showed that they did not identify themselves with the Italian movement as a whole. His daughter's work must disprove similar charges made against the Venetians of to-day. She at least, while she yields to none in her loyalty to Venice, is contributing to the limit of her powers to the spiritual welfare of the Italian people.

Pompeo Molmenti



OLMENTI has been called "the most authentic of the heirs of Venice." And not without reason, for he has devoted his life to the preservation of his heritage not only by his scholarly research into the sources of Venetian history and his monumental work on the *Private Life of the Venetians*, but by his untiring zeal in preventing the destruction of old Venice by the advocates of "modern improvements." Reading his many volumes of history, with their vast knowledge, both comprehensive and minute, one imagines him leading the life of a scholar, withdrawn into his villa in the lake region of the Veneto, returning to his native city only to study the documents or to contemplate the art and architecture of the past. The truth is that for fifty years he has been in the mêlée of public life, plunging from one activity to another, as a member of committees and commissions, as deputy, as senator, as president of the Academy of Arts and of many other institutes and societies, as Undersecretary of State in the Ministry of the Arts. He is constantly looked to for leadership by those who believe that Venice may be modernized in all essential features without losing her unique beauty. He is always on the alert, never allowing his studies to divert his attention from the daily fortunes of the city and assuming the responsibility of active effort when danger threatens.

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Whether he has lost or won, his part in the struggle has always been prompted by a firm belief in the possibility of reconciling practical aims with the demands of beauty. He is a conspicuous example of that sense of the relationship between the useful and the beautiful which enabled the merchants of the Adriatic to construct from the richest of cities the most beautiful of cities. In all of his polemics, in his appeals to the citizens, to officials, and to parliaments, he has never advocated the sacrifice of comfort and health and prosperity to picturesque effects or to the preservation of the old for its own sake. He has always tried to find a way by which the demands of modern life may be met more practically by preservation and restoration than by destruction and inharmonious innovations. And in notable disputes in which his opponents have won, the result has proved that the project was as unpractical as it was unlovely. While he is always on the side of the artists, who are in constant conflict with the promoters of industry in many parts of Italy, he is a steady balance wheel, preventing their appeals from degenerating into a useless revolt against changes, insisting that changes must come and that they must be met with equal consideration of all the interests at stake. If he is the "leader in a holy crusade," as he has been called, his weapon is cool reason. He may grow impassioned in praising Venice to a sympathetic audience, but when he is fighting for a cause he never stirs the emotions by flights of oratory.

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His most difficult opponents are those who attempt to meet him on his own ground and, professing an equal zeal for their inheritance, maintain that to widen streets and destroy buildings will open the greater monuments to view and so increase their impressiveness. Against these he argues that the beauty of the monuments depends to a large extent upon their original setting and above all upon the atmosphere surrounding them; that once Venice has become standardized and made to simulate a modern metropolis, its essential character will be destroyed and even Saint Mark's and the Doge's Palace will become less beautiful. On the practical side he reiterates that the first consideration must be the public health and that the hygiene of the city, which has always been remarkable for its freedom from epidemics, depends upon the free circulation of wind and water. Not only is it absurd to build carriage roads where there are no carriages and wide avenues where there are no automobiles, but the widening of streets means the closing of canals and interference with the free movement of cleansing tides. His firm conviction is that hygienic Venice and artistic Venice form a united whole and that the city must be preserved in its integrity.

He can only lament the gradual decay which has been going on for centuries and which he is too late in his generation to prevent. But even to-day Venice is not only one great harmonious monument of art; it is also a fountain of life where the vital energy of the

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past flows into the common life of the present; what she has been she is and such she must remain.

Broad streets have been cut through in spite of his efforts, and those who have seen them must be aware of their futility as well as of their ugliness. Moreover, they allow dust to accumulate, and freedom from dust is one of the chief safeguards of the city's health. It would have been far better to open up new canals and to spend the municipal funds in keeping them dredged. The innovators can never make Venice into a city set upon a hill, but they may prevent her from profiting by the advantage of being built in the sea. They may easily reduce her, as Molmenti is never tired of saying, to a stagnant city of the plain, left to die of malaria.

Ever since the fall of the Republic, the cry has gone up from time to time that Venice must be connected with the mainland by a bridge; that her decadence could be arrested only by putting an end to her isolation in the lagoon. Indeed, the idea was considered by Doge Foscarini as early as 1763. He, however, soon abandoned the project and turned his attention to the lace- and glass-making industries and to overseas traffic. Zealous as he was for the recovery of commerce and industry, he did not look to the poor and almost desolate territory of the neighboring mainland for economic recovery; he looked to the sea, the foundation of the greatness of the Republic. Things had changed when the agitation was revived in the nine-

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teenth century and the railroad bridge was built under the Austrian régime and completed in 1846. But the apostles of progress were not contented with the railroad bridge, with its 222 arches and its length of 3601 meters and its continual passage of trains. When Venice had recovered her freedom, they insisted that foot-passengers and vehicles must be provided with free passage, that small merchants and truck-farmers cannot afford to pay for transportation by rail, that boats are too slow and cumbersome, that Venice must thrive like other cities by close union with the surrounding country, that she must "feel the heart of Italy beating against her own" and that those who are unwilling to grant her that privilege are bent upon making her a dead museum of antiquities. Again and again in the last decades the project has been brought forward, Chambers of Commerce voting for it, Molmenti and the Academy of Arts protesting against it, until a word has been coined for use in the perennial controversy. Its advocates are called *pontisti*. Whenever there is talk of better roads in Italy, a petition is sent in for a road from Venice to the mainland. The latest plan, which got so far as to be approved by the Provincial Council but was rejected by the municipality of Venice, provided for a construction of iron and steel to skirt one side of Venice and then, dividing in two parts, to extend to Murano on the one side and on the other along the Lido as far as Chioggia, thus

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connecting the chief islands of the lagoon with Venice and the mainland.

Molmenti came forward to prevent this calamity, as he had done many times before; and now at last Mussolini has declared that there shall not be another bridge of any kind whatsoever and that if he had his way the railroad bridge would be destroyed.

Molmenti has contended that the project of another bridge aims at the life-principle of Venice. An ancient decree carved on the office wall of the Magistrate of Waters declared that anyone who injured the water of the lagoon was an enemy of Venice. This, Molmenti repeats, is as true to-day as it was then. The construction of another bridge would be injurious to the lagoon and hence to the health and prosperity of the city. It would create a tideless, windless area, with malaria following in its wake. The railroad bridge has already created one such area; a second bridge would more than double the evil. For all this Molmenti has the word of specialists to support him, although recent *pontisti* have been able to secure the statement of a few hydraulic engineers to the effect that the damage may be minimized by certain expedients. Nevertheless, he points out, even they admit the danger. And what, he asks, would be the gain? To connect Venice with the low-lying malarial districts of the immediate neighborhood would be of no advantage to industry; things would still have to be brought from farther inland; and even if they were brought by motor trucks

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to the edge of the city, wider streets to the market centers would be the next necessary step. The ancient waterways are still, he maintains, the great endowment of Venice. Her port, her canals, offer the most economical and the most practical means of transportation. The *pontisti* are nursing an illusion. Venice will never become the active center of a rich countryside. She is a city built in the sea. But she may prosper as of old by making better use of her natural situation. She can have the very best systems of lighting and heating and modern conveniences of every kind. Only she must not try to change her nature. Public funds must be spent to preserve and not to destroy her. She must not be reduced to a marsh-infected desolation. Molmenti, remarking upon the half-way station in the latest plan, which was to have a garden and theater and restaurant, wonders what use there will be for the restaurant unless to provide chops served in quinine and beefsteaks in antipyrine.

In this last controversy the Venetians were overwhelmingly on the side of Molmenti. "The extent to which the city can be stirred," he wrote, "is a cheering fact. The people of the lagoons have carried through the centuries a characteristic serenity which sometimes seems to indicate indifference and skepticism. On the contrary, it is surety and calm. Under the threat of a foreign enemy, Venice faced her martyrdom with a serene countenance and even with a light smile on her lips. But at the threat of an injury much less serious

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and an insult less grave, the soul of Venice rose in rebellion. And the fantastic design was buried forthwith."

"But," he adds, "the *pontisti* have not disarmed. They are relying on the Venetian disposition"—and the Venetian disposition he has so often commented upon that he leaves his meaning to be understood. "While in our public life," he has elsewhere said, "there is an abundance of youthful energy and genius, there is too little sense of discipline and order and patience in routine. Impulse, enthusiasm, exaltation, are followed by easy discouragement and quick forgetfulness." With this warning he doubles his vigilance, and that nothing may be left to carelessness he has recently organized a Society for Public Art which is to assist him in his guardianship and watchfulness, and even to work for the removal of some hideous additions to the modern city.

A poet of the Republic once wrote: "Men made Rome, the gods made Venice"; and for this epigram he was rewarded by the government. But Molmenti insists that Venice was made by the industry of men in a very special sense and that more than other cities she must defend her life by untiring effort. He quotes with more approval another epigram to the effect that Venice has three enemies, the rivers, the sea, and men. Which means that she must wage continual warfare against the rivers, which deposit the refuse of the mainland in the lagoon; against the sea, which piles

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up sand inside the islands; and against men who are always building things, either dikes or huts or canals for drainage or magnificent bridges, which interfere with the flow of waters.

The suggestion of a subway under land and water has recently been made as a substitute for the bridge. That would mean, said Molmenti, that we should not *see* the destruction of Venice but we should *hear* it. The plan was rejected on the ground that the foundations of the city would not endure the strain of the vibrations of underground trains. In the meantime the construction of an industrial port on the mainland side of the lagoon has done much to satisfy both factions. It has offered new impulse to industry and it is tending to remove from the old city the factories and warehouses and other such constructions which another bridge would have multiplied.

When the Campanile fell in 1902, Molmenti became the leader of the movement for its reconstruction. Without its Campanile, Venice was a ship without a mast. Molmenti advocated its reproduction in every possible detail. The watchword of the movement was "Where it was and as it was" and when with the aid of that other distinguished Venetian scholar, Giacomo Boni, the project became an accomplished fact, those words, *Dove era, come era*, were engraved on the medal which was struck to commemorate the event.

The consternation caused by the fall of the Cam-

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panile left the Venetians in a state of panic lest all of their monuments were in a similar danger. Molmenti was the cool head among them. He pointed out the special reasons for the weakness of the Campanile which other monuments did not share. He showed them that their fears were exaggerated and at the same time he sought to take advantage of their awakened interest to accomplish certain changes that a reasonable caution demanded. As early as 1898 he had appealed to the Royal Institute of Science, Letters and Art for the removal of the Library of Saint Mark and the Archæological Museum from the Doge's Palace which was overweighted to the danger point. At that time his argument was centered upon the library. Both for the sake of making room for necessary reparations inside the palace and for the better preservation and accessibility of the rare and valuable books and manuscripts, he urged its immediate removal into the palace known as the *Zecca* adjoining its original seat, the Sansovino Library. The matter was taken to the government and there, for lack of funds, it was delayed year by year, until, four months after the fall of the Campanile, Molmenti, taking advantage of the consternation caused by that disaster, renewed his appeal to the Venetian Institute and in 1904 it was finally accomplished. The library continued to grow, Molmenti continued to interest himself in its welfare, and after the victory of Vittorio Veneto, when the king presented many of his royal palaces to the coun-

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try and Molmenti was appointed Undersecretary of State to arrange for the use to be made of them, he was able to see finally realized two long-cherished desires: the Marcian Library was once more housed in that magnificent building, "the crowning triumph of Venetian art," the Sansovino Library, from which Napoleon had removed it; while the Archæological Museum and the civic museum called the *Museo Correr* were brought together in the long palace on the other side of the Piazza, the *Procuratie Vecchie*. The contents of the Archæological Museum are of no great importance, but the *Museo Correr*, rearranged in the spacious rooms of the building, which has been stripped of the additions made by the Austrians and restored to its original design, is a monument to Molmenti's wisdom and perseverance as well as a compendium to his *Private Life of the Venetians*. In his speech at its inauguration he recounted how, during the decline of the Republic, a ruthless sale of the treasures of Venice went on unimpeded. Precious marbles, bronzes, paintings, and inscriptions were sold in the market, and, after the fall of the Republic, one hundred and seventy buildings were either abandoned or destroyed. During this time, one valiant citizen, Theodor Correr, who died in 1830, collected what he could and preserved his treasures for future generations. During the war, four hundred cases of the contents of the collection were removed to the safer cities of Italy. When they were returned and the museum was reopened in

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its quarters on the *Fondamenta dei Turchi*, the Venetians rejoiced that nothing had been lost or injured. Now they rejoice to see the collection, which embodies so much of historic Venice, rearranged in its magnificent quarters, and Molmenti begs them to look upon it as a proof of his life-long contention that industrial activity need not suffocate artistic taste. The opening of the new museum is to him the lighting of a fire of study and art on the hearthstone of the city to the end that the minds of the multitude may listen to the voice of the past and the new civilization may be founded upon the memories and the traditions of old Venice.

During the war Molmenti continued to preside over the meetings of the Institute of Art, which watched and deliberated, ready to interfere if military authorities permitted any disrespect to the city's treasures or were not quick to repair the damage done by air raids. Fortunately, the officers in charge of the maritime zone were as zealous in their care of Venice as Molmenti could have been, and the call of the watchmen of the air was a constant reminder of the precious treasure they had to protect. But after the war the conflict was begun again with renewed intensity. Both sides were reënforced, the one by gratitude for the escape from the 736 bombs dropped by Austrian aeroplanes and from the threat of the invading army, and the other by the increase of poverty and the need of restoring the city industrially and commercially. The

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problem is a living one; Molmenti and his associates will have no respite; but the building of the industrial port is a proof of their contention that, if only the changes are made wisely, neither beauty nor material success need be sacrificed.

I have heard it asserted with all seriousness by Americans in Venice that the old city is so ill-adapted to modern life as to present an insoluble problem and that the inhabitants ought to be removed and the city kept as a museum in literal fact. Against such an idea, Molmenti and his whole life-work rise to protest. Such an opinion argues a very limited knowledge of Venice and the Venetians. Molmenti's larger comprehension of the past and the present lends weight to his conviction that by forethought and industry, and by entrusting matters of æsthetic value to men qualified to judge æsthetically, her modern life may be reconciled with the preservation of her beauty. Whatever happens, he will never give up; as long as he lives, he will continue to fight for the preservation of his heritage.

Venice is "the Andromeda of Europe, chained to her island and trembling in fear of the monster, Modern Progress." Molmenti is her Perseus—only his method of setting her free is to tame the beast and train him to lie at her feet.

Giacomo Boni



IACOMO BONI will be remembered as the genius of the Roman Forum. He lived for more than half his life in Rome; and it was in Rome, in the midst of the ruins which he invested with new meaning by his excavations and with new fascination by his landscape gardening, that he was visited by representatives of all nations and all walks of life—by scholars and poets, by scientists and historians, by politicians and men of affairs, by kings and queens, by Roosevelt and Wilson and Kitchener and Gorki and Anatole France. To the discerning visitor he was the modern representative of ancient Rome. Yet nobody who knew him could ever forget that he was a Venetian. Although he was at home in many languages, his native Venetian was the language of his intimate life and his best letters were written in that dialect. One would like to have heard his conversations with Pope Pius X and with Eleonora Duse! Did they find much in common, one wonders, as they talked in their native Venetian with its soft mellifluous sounds and its clear-cut ejaculatory endings? Merely to hear Boni say “I am a Venetian” (*Io sono Veneziano*) was to understand that his pride of race was strong and genuine. It was the only honor of which he ever boasted.

An architect by training, his fame rests upon his work as an archæologist, and the monument to his memory which represents his greatest satisfaction is

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his garden on the Palatine. He was a man of wide learning and practical achievement, who nevertheless saw visions and dreamed dreams. Those who knew him will remember him as serious and rather slow of speech, not quite at home in the drawing-room but utterly natural in the Forum or in his house or garden, with the concentration of a deep thinker and the merry laugh and gentle heart of a child. When his interest was centered upon his work of excavating and exploring underground he had all the intensity of a man of action; no detail was unregarded, no fact unobserved. Yet always one knew that the significance of things was what interested him; that the meaning and the beauty of the past and the present were his real concern and that he never mistook the means for the end. Knowing the variety of his interests and activities, one was surprised at his serenity, as if beneath his many projects a single purpose burned with a steady flame at the center of his genius. And in truth he never worked from any lesser motive than that single purpose which gave unity to his talents and conveyed to his friends the impression of one who was "in harmony with the universe."

Everyone who knew him felt the charm of his personality, and everyone, the most hard-headed and the most impressionable, bears witness to the beauty of his eyes. Those large blue eyes "that seemed to reflect the infinite azure of the Italian heavens" or to hold in them the depths of blue that surround the city of the

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sea—their clarity let you into a deep interior where the mystery of his inner life lay hidden.

When I first saw Boni, many years ago, he seemed to me a rather heavy-looking person, unprepossessing, shy and silent and somber. I thought of him as an arbitrary genius who would insist upon lecturing about fauna and flora and the condition of the soil when we wanted to hear about the Black Stone and Romulus and Juturna and the Temple of Julius Cæsar. Only a few days later, in the Forum, he was a different person. He seemed to have suddenly waked up—though he had waked up from dreams and the melancholy of far horizons lingered about him. He was alert and full of enthusiasm, clear in his explanations, definite and matter-of-fact, pausing now and then to chat playfully with the little girl at my side or to speak to a workman and to be answered in such a way as to confirm the statement that “his workmen adored him.” Years later, when I visited him in his house that hung over the edge of the Palatine between his garden and the Forum, these two so different personalities began to show themselves as one and the same, and I understood that he was truly a great man. He was just recovering from the first attack of the illness that kept him a semi-invalid for seven years before he died. He, too, was a victim of the war, for his illness was due to overexposure at the front where, among other things, he had invented a kind of waterproof, coldproof boot for the Alpine troops. In his confinement he had been

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indulging in some of his very practical dreams and had written a pamphlet upon the cultivation of sweet potatoes as a means of reclaiming certain sandy tracts of land. I had climbed up from the Forum, passing the curious grotto and fountain, a relic of the Renaissance, which decorates the cliff-side beneath his house; I had walked along the garden paths, under bowers of roses, and entered through a door directly into a room which seemed larger than the whole house as it appeared from the outside. Several tables were strewn with papers and pamphlets and maps and drawings; and in the midst of the pamphlets about sweet potatoes and the reports on the distribution of soldiers' boots, on the table over against the window looking down upon the Forum, stood a marble torso of exquisite workmanship—a girl or a goddess—nobody knew—but certainly Greek, and so beautiful that it effaced everything in the room, except Boni, who sat beside it and touched it caressingly while he told us, in his fragmentary style of speech, how it had been discovered. The idealism, the poetic imagination, that was behind the manifestations of his inquiring mind shone in his eyes and sounded in his voice. Watching him and listening, it was easy to understand how he could have been so indifferent to the storms of opposition he had raised from time to time and no less indifferent to the honors thrust upon him by one nation after another. It was easy to understand his resolution to live without a family and devote himself to his work. It was easy to

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believe that his life had been a series of personal sacrifices and to appreciate the quiet force which had led him through clashing critics and organized opposition to the accomplishment of his purpose. It was easy to see that his "prodigious idealism" held him in the upper air with his head above the clouds while his practical realism kept his feet firmly planted on the ground.

A few years later, I visited him again, when he was unable to rise from his bed. He knew that life had dealt hardly with me in the meantime, and without a word about his own troubles—indeed without a word about mine—he somehow expressed with silent sympathy the depth of feeling, the humanity, without which he could not have been so great a humanist.

The story has still to be written of Boni's excursions into many fields of research and of his varied writings upon such different subjects as music, philosophy, botany and agronomy, the study of Dante in America, the mosaics of Saint Mark's Cathedral, amulets and superstitions, bells and carillons, the protection of Venice from the modernizers, the danger of fire to works of art, the scientific production of oil, the character of the natives of Morocco, Japanese poetry, and the evils of alcoholism. Just as he who seemed to be always at his station between the Palatine and the Forum was yet a great traveler, so he remained an archæologist with a single task and purpose while he explored wherever his thoughts led him. His thoughts

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were held in bounds only by a sound habit of observation.

That he never collected and arranged his notes on his work as "Director of Excavations for the Forum and the Palatine" was charged against him in his later years. A man who had discovered the *lapis niger*, or "Tomb of Romulus," only by disobeying the authorities, taking his workmen to the spot under cover of night, when he had been forbidden to excavate; a man who announced that his reading of the Vedas suggested his search for a prehistoric burial-ground under the Forum and then found it, to the discomfiture of the scoffers; one whose communications to officials were full of allusions they could not understand—citations from Greek and Oriental philosophers as well as modern scientists—was naturally one to arouse opposition in lesser men. And when he had been proved right time after time and was given complete authority and liberty of action, it was natural that they should find something for disapproval. So they said that he was leaving things at loose ends and not putting his reports in order for his successor. Doubtless he expected his successor to find his own way as he had found his. His notes as he left them may not be systematic but they have a value, we are told by those who worked with him, exceeding that of mere reports. With his characteristic attention to detail, they reveal his power of synthesis and his constant reaching out for something beyond. He could not record a dis-

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covery without setting it in its relationship with what was known and with what he believed was yet to be revealed. One may conjecture that his method will be more stimulating to his successors than a compilation that would have satisfied officialdom.

When he was called to Venice after the fall of the Campanile he was given the task of clearing away the débris and sinking it with a fitting ceremony in the sea and of reconstructing the tower. And in spite of the heat and his exhausting work he was to be found at the noon hour poring over a Greek Anthology. That was his pleasure and recreation. To say that an inquiring mind and a poetic temperament were his distinctive characteristics is to give but a faint conception of his insatiable thirst for knowledge and desire of beauty.

When asked how he had been led to his important discoveries, he would reply that it was mere instinct, that it was something quite irrational, like the power of the diviner's rod. If any were misled by his answer it was because they did not know the extent of his learning and the sound knowledge on which his work was based.

But he had in him the creative instinct. He could not be satisfied with the study of what had been, even though it led to the finding of new meanings and a new understanding of the past. Through all the years of his excavating he was occupied with an ambitious work of construction. And those who knew the Forum

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and the Palatine twenty-five years ago will realize as they see them to-day that they have been made the material of a great work of creative art. Largely with the proceeds of his writings, he collected plants and trees from far and near and placed them around the walls and monuments in such a way that they are no longer dry and dusty piles of antiquity, as many of them were before, but parts of a vast garden where every season has its surprises, where the old relics are touched to life by the growing things around them. The beautiful columns that are left are more beautiful in their new setting and those things that were merely objects of interest to the student and of curiosity to the tourist have been made objects of beauty by the grouping of trees around them, by vines and flowers blooming over them, by vistas of green and masses of brilliant color. It is a complete transformation designed and executed by one who, like the Venetians of old, was always striving to unite truth with beauty.

He died in 1925 and was buried in his garden on the Palatine, between his little house and the Palaces of the Cæsars.

Eleonora Duse



It is a crime to save the lives of those children," said a bland American as we watched the waifs of the Red Cross Ospizio playing on the Lido sands.

My heart sank. They were pathetic little creatures, but I was proud of their improvement. Now for a moment I wondered if all the chances were not hopelessly against them. Then I thought of Duse. She must have been just such a child as these—as neglected and forlorn and sickly and ill-favored as the worst of them, with the same shadows under her eyes and the same far-away look and the same listless, weary manner. It is true that she inherited her dramatic instinct from a family of actors; and, if she was denied the "right to be well-born," she was endowed by nature with an inflexible will, invincible courage, and exquisite sensibility. But these waifs were Venetians, too; and who could tell what inheritance some of them might have, to overcome the misfortunes of their birth? If the bland American, with his theories of eugenics and child welfare, had seen Duse at the same age he would have declared that she was not fit to live.

Born in a third-class railroad coach between a performance of her father's dialect troupe in Venice and another the next evening at Vigevano, tossed about and forgotten while her parents acted night after night in the small towns of their circuit, left alone in cold, dark

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rooms because fire and candles were costly, miserably nourished and often too tired and ill to eat or sleep, forced to take part in the dialect plays at the age of four—to be kicked under the table by the shrew of the piece for the amusement of the spectators—it is no wonder that she was always a victim of those strange moods which her father called the disease of Venice—the *Smara* or *Salmara*—when a kind of mist comes over the eyes and penetrates the being like a fog, driving into the consciousness an overmastering sense of “the sorrows of the past, the bitterness of the present, and the uncertainties of the future.” It is no wonder that her beauty was always a “tragic beauty.” The wonder is that she lived to grow up. That she surmounted every obstacle and became what she was is one of the miracles of genius.

Even while the American was speaking Duse was at the war front, devoting herself with all the intensity of her nature to the soldiers of the Grappa, the fortified mountain which looked down upon her little house in Asolo which, in turn, looked down upon Venice. She who, in the midst of her greatest triumphs, had always longed to be free from the demands of the stage and live like other women, made her first home in a Venetian *palazzino* and, after all her wanderings and vicissitudes, came to live at last close beside Venice on the hilltop of Asolo. She was torn from that lovely spot among her own people by her desire to devote all she had—her art, her sym-

Eleonora Duse

pathy, her money—to the suffering soldiers. And before she had recovered from the exhaustion of that experience, she tore herself away again and returned to the stage for that last tour, urged on by the necessity for money.

She wrote to an Italian woman who was leaving at the same time on a mission to the Russian peasants: "How I envy you, elect soul that you are! You are following the dictates of your heart, while I am obliged to work for money."

Fortune and the favor of the world had taught her to surround herself with the kind of luxuries that partially satisfied her craving for beauty. She had the instincts of a grand lady as well as of an artist. She could not save money any more than she could save herself in love and friendship. The war had greatly diminished her resources and, although the success of her acting for the soldiers may have stirred the smoldering flame of her old ambitions, she believed that she was driven back to the stage by stern necessity.

Yet she declined a pension offered her by the Italian government. Perhaps she desired to prove to herself and to the world that, in spite of her precarious health, her spirit was not broken. Perhaps she wanted to put an end to the popular belief that the publication of the novel in which D'Annunzio made use of her and of their secret intimacy as literary material was a blow from which she had not recovered. She had in truth never recovered financially from the inroads into her

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fortune made by her generosity to him and by her futile effort to prevent the publication of that book. And when someone rebuked D'Annunzio for his treatment of her, the arch-egotist responded: "I have given Duse the greatest things in life. I have given her love and sorrow. Are there any greater gifts than these?"

However warmly the Venetians responded to D'Annunzio's claim to be an adopted son of Venice, they never forgave him for his conduct toward Duse. And his public gesture, when incongruous death overtook her in Pittsburgh—his telegram to the government, which was given to the press—only confirmed their judgment. It is hardly possible that anyone with the blood of ancient Venice in his veins would have been capable of demanding for her dead body the honors of a national hero when he knew himself so largely responsible for the tragedy of her life and death.

As an artist Duse belongs to the world and the world has placed her among its greatest. She transcends the limits of any race or any people. And yet, however differently her eulogists explain her power—one emphasizing her intellect and understanding, another her austere genuineness, another her voice, another her gestures—they agree that her acting was "merely an echo of what she was"; that it "partook of the nature of great poetry, great sorrow and joy and beauty, because life had made and molded her into a rare per-

Eleonora Duse

sonality." When her friends say of her that she was "greater as a woman than as an artist" the phrase is meaningless. Yet one could not see her off the stage—or on it—without recognizing a force and charm of personality distinct from her dramatic power. And that personality, it is recognized, was characteristically Italian.

Her fellow countrymen, however, do not think of her as an "Italian." They think of her as a Venetian. And in truth her qualities are not those which distinguish the Tuscan or the Roman or the Neapolitan. They are Venetian qualities. To enumerate them is to meet the difficulty again of distinguishing the woman from the artist. To say that she combined self-discipline with spontaneity, restraint with emotional abandonment, vision and comprehension with attention to the smallest of details, soaring idealism with unflinching realism, is merely to say that she was an artist. Since the time of Goldoni, who belonged to a traveling company like that of the Duses, Venice has produced many actors and playwrights of national fame. They fade into nothingness beside Duse. And yet, like them, she remained a Venetian. She shared with them the characteristics of a common inheritance as truly as she shared their familiarity with the Venetian dialect. Indeed, as one knew her off the stage she had more in common with the Venetian archæologist and the Venetian pope than with her only rival to supremacy among the actresses of her time. In the

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traits of her character, in her mental quality, she was nearer to Boni and to Pius X than to Bernhardt.

It has been said that the older the civilization the more surely one finds in the lowliest of the people an innate aristocracy which shows itself in gentle feelings and gracious manners. It is an incomplete explanation of Duse's acting to say that she reached the heights by simple means because she was born to suffering and the great tragic emotions were her own emotions. She was a woman of wide culture imposed by self-discipline upon a nature of deep spirituality. She had made up for her lack of early education by resolutely teaching herself. Her intellectual interests did not lag far behind her æsthetic instinct and her power of appreciation. But she did not have to learn to be a lady. She needed no books of etiquette to instruct her in correct behavior. She was at her ease with princes of the blood and as "democratic" in her feelings as the King of Italy. It was difficult to realize that she was not one of the most highly born and gently nurtured of her race. Even before one was aware of the tragic beauty of her deep eyes, one felt the subtle distinction of her presence. Her aristocratic bearing is as great a miracle, when one remembers her childhood, as her dramatic genius.

She was whimsical and impulsive and capable of flying into a passion. She was often exacting and unreasonable. Yet she was adored by those who worked with her and under her. She was more ready to hold

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herself aloof from lords and ladies than to fail in responsiveness to sincere and simple kindness. She was as variable as the winds; but like the sea, which the wind ruffles, she remained the same beneath the surface. She was not constant but she was loyal. No personal self-sacrifice was too great when prompted by loyalty. Perhaps her father was right. Perhaps her variable moods, together with the rarer qualities of her mysterious and fascinating personality, were the gift of the city of the sea.

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IF the unity of the Venetians was remarkable during the war, their diversity of sentiment after the armistice was no less remarkable and no less characteristic. It was not that they fell apart into two camps—those who were ready for a new order and those who clung to the old. Within the narrow limits of the maritime zone, where, in addition to Venetians, there were officers from all parts of Italy, so many shades of opinion were represented with so little relation to class or regional prejudices that one felt oneself in an atmosphere of mental chaos. The Italians are indeed a highly individualized people. They do not readily dispose of themselves in groups and self-expression through organized channels is for them difficult and imperfect. "If you put all of us into the same uniform," one of them said, "we shall put it on so differently that in a short time you will have no two of us alike." And in Venice, where one side of the Venetian character was revealed in their united spirit of courage and self-sacrifice and the other, no less real, in the variety of their attitudes toward the peace, you could find high-minded patriots and constructive statesmen aligned with jingoes and champions of aggression, while thinkers and scholars and hard-headed men of affairs might be of one mind with the disaffected or the indifferent or the ignorant. The small critic who condemned the government because it

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did not demand in the Paris Conference five times as much as it hoped to get might be on the side of the historian and scholar who for reasons geographical, geological, ethnological, philological, traditional, cultural, and moral, made his point in learned discourses or in volumes bound up with maps and illustrations. Of two persons who had been heart and soul in the war, sacrificing everything, one would declare: "Italy made war for something far above and beyond a strip of land." While the other, listening to the plea of the Dalmatian cities, would explain: "They are Italians, and shall we deny them?"

That the war was for Italy a war of "redemption" no loyal Italian ever denied. The wrongs of 1866 were to be righted; the making of Italy was to be completed not by gifts which the nation spurned, but by sacrifice and death. Yet while one irredentist would make large concessions in order to prove to the world that the charge of imperialism was not to be laid at Italy's door, another cried out for a Roman, an imperialistic, peace. "Our national boundaries must be restored," said a prominent journalist and member of Parliament. "But if that necessitates taking in any foreign population it will be a great misfortune. For Italy's strength lies in her homogeneity. We want no racial problem within our borders."

Cavour, who died with the name of Rome and Venice on his lips, knew well, as did Mazzini and all of the great patriots, that Italy would never be free

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and united until she had been liberated as far as her natural boundaries in the Julian Alps. That fact the present generation, true to Cavour's prophecy, have seen with a clear vision and an undivided will. But beyond Fiume lies Dalmatia; and on the whole question of the Adriatic voices were as confused as the problem is complex.

D'Annunzio, who spoke loudest and was farthest heard, ought to belong as a poet to the idealists or as a warrior to those who interpret the peace in the terms of the victory. Yet he was with neither the one nor the other. For the idealists had the international point of view, which he had not, while many men of the army, deeply concerned with enlarging Italy to her Alpine boundaries, saw grave difficulties in the holding of Dalmatia; and the necessity of a military force to keep peace with a subject people was not in their reading of Italy's triumph. "By every reason, human and divine," said D'Annunzio, "Dalmatia belongs to Italy." According to him, the soldier who fought and bled bore on his shoulders the cross of Dalmatia and sacrificed on the altar of her cities over whose portals the lion of Saint Mark's stands guard among the ruins of ancient Rome. "Every drop of blood shed on the Piave flows in a current that washes the shores of the Adriatic as far as Otranto." "Who denies you," he said to the Dalmatians, "gives you over to be the slave of slaves, crowns your long martyrdom with a hideous

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death, slays you and every hope within you, commits a crime inexpiable."

A wise humanitarian, who proved himself a warrior no less intrepid than D'Annunzio, invoked the struggle in the Alps and on the Carso in a different sense, saying: "We wrong the soldier when we say that for his sake we must demand Dalmatia. You, signora, have seen the battlefields. You have seen that unyielding ground where the conflict was against unconquerable nature no less than against man's unnatural weapons; where we fought our way up and up from hill to hill, always to find another hill beyond and the enemy still hurling fire on us from above. You have seen our defenses hacked out of solid rock which offered neither water to drink nor earth in which to bury our dead. Do you think it was to acquire territory that we endured these things? 'Trent and Trieste' was an effective warcry and as far as it went it was honest. But we were not fighting to rescue Trent and Trieste, much less Dalmatia. We were fighting to save the soul of Italy. We were taking our part in the great world contest. Italy had not failed to see her mission. And we were proud that we alone of the Allies had made advances into the enemy's country. Whatever appeals were made in the name of conquest, I regret them bitterly, for I believe that by such appeals the ground was prepared for the poisonous seed of Caporetto."

The poet-aviator and the wise humanitarian were no farther apart than any two people one might meet

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on any day in Venice or in any part of the talkative land of Italy. And perhaps in no other way than through conversation does one gain such a vivid impression of the mental attitudes that combine in some mysterious way to make up the national character. Ferrero interpreted the situation in writing with scholarly premeditation from the historian's point of view. Luzzatti evolved in the same temper the economic bearings of the problem. The newspapers represented the politicians. But for those who were seeking a spontaneous expression of the people's will there was no substitute for the spoken word.

Yet conversations, like other gems, are only half-worth outside their setting. Within a few weeks I heard the matter discussed in the Piazza of Venice among the soldiers and the pigeons; over the teacups in a fifteenth-century palace which bears the scars of an unexploded bomb that fell through the roof to its foundations; at the lunch table of a torpedo-boat destroyer where the young marines, gaily beribboned for their deeds of valor, enjoyed nothing so much as to praise America unless it were to listen to praises of Italy; at an officers' mess where were a physician, a professor of literature, an engineer, a baron whose estates are in the remote mountains of Calabria, and the gentle heir of an ancient family of Florence whose profession is the army; on the express train, "Roma-Trieste," as it crossed the Piave on the new bridge beside the stark ruins of the old and wound its way

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among wrecks of villages, between the trenches of the lower Carso, through the Pompeian silence of Monfalcone, under the castle that was an Austrian stronghold, over the Virgilian Timavo which gushes from the heart of the mountains and falls down in bright streams to the sea, past the dark, formidable Hermada, into the city whose patron saint is named The Just. I heard it discussed in a café in Pola, near the great Roman amphitheater, where stories of the suppression of Italian sympathy by Croatian priests in the neighboring towns made vivid arguments, in the deck-ballroom of an American warship where the music was beaten out with such superenergy that not all the Venetian ladies gathered there could alter the impression that one had been suddenly dropped into one's native town; and on a certain broad embankment where men and women of the *popolo veneziano* walked up and down for recreation, ready always to give vent to their opinions and to adorn the subject with dramatic narrative and picturesque detail.

"Only listen," said an eloquent countess over the teacups, "to the plea of the Dalmatian cities. 'At least,' they cry, 'we might have been left under the rule of Austria. That was a galling yoke. But to snatch us from Austria only to hurl us back beneath the crudest element of the Austrian hegemony, with a national existence not six months old—was it for this the war was fought?' I know these people," the countess continued, "and I assure you that they are the most Italian

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of Italians. Only think how many of our greatest men have been Dalmatians—literary men, sculptors, architects. An Austrian subject once remarked that the inhabitants of Zara were fond of writing poetry in the language of neighboring peoples! Even now they write Italian. They speak the Venetian dialect. Their every instinct is Italian. They have kept alive the flame of patriotism through the centuries and have taught their children, perforce in secret, that they are heirs of a noble race. And shall we destroy their hope in the hour of victory? and exclude them from the great new Italy? The mountains separate them from their ancient enemy; the sea stretches out to join them to the Italian shores. By the principle of the free choice of peoples, must they not belong to Italy?"

"Dalmatia would be a burden," said a high commander, standing on a balcony which overhangs the Grand Canal, "a burden that Italy cannot afford to assume. Sentimental appeals aside, what should we gain? Only problems—insoluble problems. The Adriatic? Ah! the argument is antiquated. If we hold Fiume and the islands of the Quarnero, the Adriatic will serve as a defense against our oriental friends who would be quite too near us if we held Dalmatia. We have had quite enough of mountain frontiers held over us." He paused a moment, looked down at some Tommies passing in a gondola, and went on: "Why should Italy make an inland lake of the Adriatic Sea? Ah, yes! I know the Doge of Venice wed the sea in a

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mystic rite because she had saved the Dalmations from the pirates—civilization from barbarism. And I know how the cities have guarded the tricolor under the high altars these hundred years. Austria's deliberate policy of denationalization has been a great crime. However, for my country's good, I should resign all claim to Dalmatia."

"The structure of the two shores of the Adriatic," said the young professor of literature at the officers' mess, "makes it essential for Italy's strength that she hold them both. It is as clear as the lines on the map. There was a moment, to be sure, when we thought the whole question of defenses might be out of date. We hailed with joy America's young idealism—the League of Nations, disarmament, universal peace. We hope still; but in the meantime we cannot afford to take chances. We are the youngest of the Allies in national existence; but we are old—too old—in experience."

"You will observe," said the physician, whose military service had been at the front line throughout the war, "you will observe that it is not those who made the noblest contribution toward winning the victory who are prating loudest of revendication and a larger Italy. The moving spirits who have carried the country with them want a greater Italy, but greater in principle and power. They want a spirit among the people that will make future wars impossible and they want to stand for progress before the world. As for Istria—I

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have made a study of Istria to its furthest corners and while it is foolish to claim that it is all Italian, yet so much of it is Italian or friendly to Italy that the most peaceful development of the country will result, I believe, if it is in Italian hands. That the same thing is true of Dalmatia I am not convinced."

The youthful marines, just returned to Venice from the waters of the Quarnero, all agreed that the matter was perfectly simple. "Give the coast to us," they said, "and in a generation the problem will be solved; and for the natural reason that the people like us. We Italians have many faults, but nobody will deny that we have big hearts. We shall not organize spy systems and terrorize the inhabitants. Why, the Croats around Fiume love us already. It is very simple."

In the shadow of the Campanile of San Marco, while the great bell Marangona was pealing out its daily reminder of the victory, a simple, hard-working citizen, distinguished as a man of talents, made his declaration. "He is a coward who would argue against Dalmatia because of difficulties. No doubt there would be problems. But Italy never yet profited by choosing the easier path. Cost what it may, we must maintain our national rights. Our troops have faced the Yugo-Slavs in battle when they called themselves Austrians—they were the most bitter foes we had to fight—and we shall not be afraid of them when they hide in the mountains of Dalmatia. There will be hard days ahead for Venice. Trieste, Fiume, Pola, will absorb her ac-

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tivities. But Venice has always been the first to hold out her hand to her sister cities. Their calls for help have come first to her across the waters and she has transmitted them faithfully to Rome. She will never desert their cause. Let justice be done—what follows will follow.”

A young Triestine who had been wounded in seven battles for Italy, while his parents had suffered four years of martyrdom interned in Austrian camps, pronounced against the acquisition of Dalmatia. “My heart aches,” he said, “for the Italians of the cities. I know the intensity of their longing, and their hatred for everything Austrian. It is an ideal hatred, deeper than any personal resentment could ever be. But I know Dalmatia, too, and I cannot wish that it should belong to Italy.”

We were three in the compartment of the Rome-Trieste express,—a tall, strong-limbed officer of the artillery, who, I observed, was what the Italians call an “apostle,”—one who is consumed with altruistic zeal—and a gruff customer in civilian clothing, something more prosperous and far less attractive than a peasant. “I’ve been down along that coast,” said the latter, addressing his compatriot, “and Italy would do well to get it. There is great wealth there. We must leave no stone unturned.” The officer’s distress was visible and I expected an outburst. But he held himself together and was silent. He was a north Italian and I knew by his silence the depth of his feeling.

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When I talked to the Baron of Calabria in Trieste, I suspected that his views were similar to those of this countryman though he was less outspoken. He talked fluently of culture and intellectual advancement. The nations of Europe, he said, were ready to do anything for the salvation of France because they believed that the light of France must be preserved for civilization. Well, then, in settling a question like that of Dalmatia, the quality of a people as well as their numbers ought to count for something. He would be sorry to see the Bolsheviks or the Yugo-Slavs rule the world. His opinion was strangely similar to that of a practical woman, the wife of a merchant, who thought that if peace were our aim "the choice of a people who could preserve harmony and conciliation among hybrid races might well fall upon Italy. The rough stone monument to Dante erected by the Austrian soldiers on the island of Isnara is one more tribute to Italy's humaneness."

A Venetian artist who was a private in the trenches refused to discuss the subject. "The only aspiration I know," he declared, "is for the young men of Italy, who must shake themselves free from this military habit of obedience and learn to use their own creative minds. Many of my friends have been seven years in the army. The most talented musician of northern Italy has been nine years under arms. The best years of our lives! But we shall do something now. You will see. Already the movement has begun."

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If President Wilson had walked up and down a Venice *fondamenta* and talked in their native tongue with the people he would not have been so sure that what the laboring man wants is work and three meals a day. These people tell you a great deal about their poverty and their suffering. They attribute everything that goes wrong to the government and everything that turns out well to chance or the Virgin Mary. And they show very little concern about work and three meals a day. What they wanted then was peace—that there should be no more wars. That was the secret of their enthusiasm for Wilson. That was why they hailed him as a savior and burned candles before his portrait in the family shrine. He came to bring peace into the world. They never doubted that he held the secret of universal peace and the power to settle all questions wisely to that end.

My thoughts go back most often to the young officer of Trieste with the seven wound stripes on his arm, because in him the best traits of a soldier seemed met with the gentlest qualities of his race. "The war has been won," he said, "because God is on the side of right. The people believe that now, and our highest task is to sustain them in that belief. I think we ought not to touch Dalmatia, not even for the sake of the patriots and martyrs."

No voices made so strong an appeal as those of the soldiers who had fought and won except those of the soldiers who had fought and died. A red-coated Gari-

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baldian of eighty years stood at the base of Manin's statue and declared, with a tremor in his voice, "Venezia Julia is written on our hearts." And one had only to read the letters of certain young volunteers who answered the first call to arms to understand how to them the driving of their hereditary enemy out of what they deemed to be Italy, whatever its extent, was as holy a motive as the guarding of the soil of France to the Frenchman.

"My grandfathers," one of them wrote, "and my uncle risked their lives fighting for Italy. And I am ready to fight for the Greater Italy, to sacrifice to her my hopes, my future, my love, my life."

"If I die, remember that my last thought and my last dream were for Italy, my Italy, my greater mother."

"It is sacrifice that consecrates love; without it love is a vanity. I climb the vast steps of the altar of my country; clouds of smoke from the grenades rise up like incense; and I feel that my hour is come. I hasten to meet it, serene, with two names on my lips, with two convictions deep in my heart, God and my country. Italy! imperishable and great! May she fulfill her destiny."

"For the greatness, for the unity, for the honor of my country; for the liberty and independence of my oppressed brothers, in the sacred name of Italy and for the love of everything Italian, I die happy."

"Teach my children," wrote Nazario Sauro to his

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wife in Venice, "that I am first of all an Italian, then a father, then a citizen."

"I have loved my country," said another, "in the intimate depths of her divine beauty. But above all things I have loved the human race and the triumph of ideals that can only be won by conflict."

"I offer my body, my soul's prison, for the defeat of those who would put out the light."

Deluded or not, these volunteers gave all they had and the discussions about "what we fought for" seemed trivial compared to their sacrifice. I heard an irredentist haranguing the people on the deck of a steamer and in the lobby of a hotel in Trieste. And I heard a young officer raise his voice in answer: "How do you know so well what the soldier fought for? His country was at war, and he did his duty. That is the whole story."

But the whole story was difficult to come by. Certainly there were many who held their opinions so firmly that they suffered a lesser martyrdom under a weak government. An admiral who obeyed the Allies in a crisis instead of his political commander was removed from his post. And while D'Annunzio who defied the Allies went free, the Prefect of Venice was removed for having assisted him.

Opinions changed as time went on and new issues were involved. But in the first breathing spell after the war, aims and ideals found free expression and

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the listener discovered how little the action of a government may represent the true character of the nation.

D'Annunzio and the New World



WAS standing in a Venice drawing-room between Commander D'Annunzio and Judge Lindsey of Colorado. Acting for the moment as interpreter between them, I was repeating the words of one to the other, while the guns were thundering a few miles away, the old house shook and the windows rattled, and instinctively we looked out of the glass doors as if we hoped to catch a glimpse through the flaring pomegranates and drooping cedar branches of the battle that was hourly gaining force.

"One thing the war has taught us," D'Annunzio was saying, "that there is no death. The old distinction between life and death exists no longer. We do not mourn our dead as formerly because the dead, we know, live on. And we no longer fear to die."

His manner of speaking would have commanded the attention of any audience in the world. The strange unattractiveness of his little bullet head, chose-shaven, of his pale face with its one seeing eye, of his rather haughty, indifferent, introspective look—this was forgotten from the moment he began to speak. His expression had changed without any change in the lines of his face, without a smile. Only, from under his brow, that penetrating look, now turned inward, and that fiber of his quiet voice which riveted the group around him as I have seen it hold vast audiences in a

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Roman amphitheater and in open fields of the war zone.

In the sultry air, tense with expectation, one could have believed anything; though one knew that the tragedies announced by every thud of cannon could not be wiped out by the calm words of the erect little man in olive-grey with the immaculate collar of white cloth about his throat.

But I was not deeply concerned just then with the meaning of his words. One might read similar statements in his latest novel. What impressed me was that, standing there between those two men, I was planted, as it were, between two worlds, the Old World and the New. These two might talk across the gap of such eternal verities as life and death. But what could they say to each other of the actual motives that governed life and persuade men to offer it voluntarily in exchange for death? The war, I reflected, had brought together two divergent worlds in the contact of a great emergency. But when the war was over, what new developments should we see then?

Our talk fell upon the "Ode to America" which D'Annunzio was writing. When it had been translated in Venice, it was to be cabled from the American Embassy at Rome and was to appear on the fourth of July in all papers. The poet, it was clear, was elated over his newest adventure. He had refused an invitation to join his son in America, "Because," he said, glancing in the direction of the guns, "I cannot leave my coun-

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try now." Meanwhile he would send a message in divine verse; and he had given up who knows how many trips in his flying squadron to remain in his little red palace on the Grand Canal while he refreshed his mind on our history and directed the flights of his fancy and his rhetoric to the formation of an ode. No doubt he expected his words to be taken as seriously in America as in Italy and France and beyond the Adriatic; and of course, he was deceived. His message, I knew later, was almost unheeded. It fell flat, with crumpled wings; and I was reminded of the difference between the Old World and the New of which I had been conscious that day over the teacups on the edge of the battle of the Piave. Moreover, the armistice was scarcely signed before I was aware of the new developments which had been vaguely foreshadowed in my mind.

In the meantime the poet-aviator had made his famous flight to Vienna, and the final victory of Vittorio Veneto had fulfilled his most glowing prophecy and caused him to exclaim, "Now for the first time I believe in God!" Yet he envied those who could rejoice in the victory. As for himself, he longed to go apart on a high mountain and be alone. Instead of which, he went among the people and began to talk.

With all the faults of his stupendous ego, D'Annunzio, if anyone, deserved a hearing. His words had raised the minds of the people to a high pitch of moral enthusiasm in two great crises of the national life. When

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the sentiment of the country was converging toward war, and in the stern days of recovery after the retreat from Caporetto, the discourses he pronounced were so exalted in tone and so important for their power of leading that, in the small and unpretentious volumes that contain them, they seem confined within too narrow limits. D'Annunzio's surcharged style is a medium of astonishing efficacy for the expression of righteous indignation, and his prose has the poetic power, so dear to his fellow countrymen, of exalting with high symbols the episodes of dull existence. Just as he transmuted the official title of the armed motor-boats on which Rizzo and Pelligrini performed their naval feats—interpreting MAS (*motoscafi anti sommergibili*) to mean *memento ardere semper*—so he translated the humdrum events of war and the task of patient resistance into a “song and a story” and fired the imagination out of which courage springs.

In his aviation camp on the island which separates the lagoons of Venice from the sea, I heard D'Annunzio give one of several addresses at a function in his honor. The Minister of Aviation wrought himself to such a pitch of feeling that he fairly foamed at the mouth—and his audience remained cold. The admiral spoke graceful and fitting words, and everyone smiled approval. The Prefect of Venice, who was always in good form, was equal to the occasion; high breeding, gentle sympathy, the finest kind of *noblesse oblige* attitude toward the struggle that was in prog-

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ress, left one less impressed by what he said than by the charm of his personality. Then D'Annunzio began. His voice was low and clear, his words came slowly as if from some vast depth of thought,—the simplest words, yet so aflame with zeal for the cause, so glowing with pride and withal so touched with reverence for generous aspiration, for personal sacrifice, for heroic achievement, that the effect was magical. Not one of his hearers but must have felt the desire suddenly spring up within him to go forth and accomplish something before the setting of the sun; not one but must have wished he could step into one of the great airships that stood about in a hollow square ready for a flight, start up the engine, and soar away into danger, to victory or death. No doubt he was factitious; no doubt Judge Lindsey could speak wiser words; no doubt the admiral and the prefect are wiser men, but for the emergency of the time, D'Annunzio could speak the word of power.

But his power was not of words alone, nor was his popularity due entirely to the susceptibility of the Italian people to rhetoric and poetry. The Garibaldian tradition of deeds is no less a reality than the tradition of the rostrum. In that complex people in whom the fiery ideals of youth combine mysteriously with age-old habits of inexorable logic, deeds of valor have the force of conclusive arguments. And D'Annunzio the volunteer, the aviator, and the wounded hero of the Carso, had a power after the war incomparably

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greater than when, returning from France, he bent himself to gird the nation for war. Whether men of lesser fame deserved the credit for his exploits of war is another question. The glory was his, and it was a glory of deeds.

If among his other endowments D'Annunzio had possessed the qualities of a statesman he would have been a great leader of his people in the difficult months between war and peace. But in his Letter to the Dalmatians, as in every word he uttered after the armistice, he showed himself lacking in the conciliatory spirit which the hour demanded. He appealed to high motives of loyalty and courage. But he failed to touch the vital needs of the present or to understand how they might be accommodated to his opportunity. He had no vision of a New World.

He had long aspired to be the national poet. The praise he most coveted was the saying that the mantle of Carducci had fallen upon him. During the Tripoli campaign he sang of heroes in many pages of verse, and at the end lamented that he had not ten battleships instead of ten poems to offer to his country. "Because," he said, "in this campaign we have but whetted our steel for the supreme conflict."

The supreme conflict was to restore the glorious days of Rome and Venice in one greater Italy and make the Adriatic Sea once more the "Gulf of Venice." Now the conflict—so much greater and less

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grandiose than he had imagined it—was ended, and he was demanding a “Roman peace.”

At the other extreme of Italian feeling were those who thought more of Mazzini and less of Julius Cæsar. Bissolati was their leader. He urged the government not to insist upon the terms of the secret pact and advocated a frontier that should exclude Dalmatia and the German Tyrol and end with the Julian Alps beyond Fiume. And the government, vacillating as usual, compelled Bissolati to resign and at the same time attempted to silence D'Annunzio. His speeches were censored, he was forbidden to appear before audiences that awaited him, he was ordered back to his military duties, he was irritated and humiliated until he too resigned and surrendered his commission. But he continued to foment nationalistic feeling, defying the government. He had said to the Dalmatians: “If my skin was tough before the war, it is ten times tougher now; and more than ever I know how to choose my means and my moment.”

The two extremes of national feeling met on the subject of Fiume. And if the conference of Paris had given heed to that fact, instead of acting as if the very opposite were the truth, all would have been different. There had never indeed been any question about Fiume except the question of how it had ever happened at any time that any Italian government had ever consented, even under pressure from Russia, that Fiume should become a part of Croatia. When Orlando ad-

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monished the public that national concessions must be made for the general good of Europe, he felt constrained to add, "This does not mean that we shall ever be called upon to surrender the inalienable rights of Italian Fiume."

On a public so minded, President Wilson's open letter, announcing his determination in regard to Fiume, fell like a bolt. To appreciate what it meant, one must understand how far-reaching had been the influence of the Wilsonian ideas during the last year of the war.

The truth is that the words of Wilson had sunk far deeper into the consciousness of the Italian people than any words of D'Annunzio's ever did. And for this clear and simple reason. Wilson spoke to them of a new world—a world of peace and justice and equality. D'Annunzio spoke to them of a revival of Rome, of the resurrection of the Latin race, of the defense of Italy's national rights and the completion of her liberation from a foreign yoke. He spoke to them of the glory of war, of the might of Italy's resistance, of the beauty of her sacrifice. Wilson spoke to them of peace on earth.

D'Annunzio spoke the words needed to urge them to war and to sustain them through the long conflict. But at the end, tired as they were, exhausted as they knew the country to be and weary with hope deferred—what could an appeal to further resistance mean to them compared to the prospect of permanent peace?

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In the first flush of victory, one of the Bersaglieri, distributing the plumes from his helmet to an admiring crowd of Venetians, exclaimed: "We are all one people, now and forever. Wilson has said it."

The poet D'Annunzio, standing on the Roman Capitoline, kissing the war-stained flag of Trieste for each of the unredeemed cities of the Adriatic coast and then binding it in *crêpe* until the day they should be liberated—what had he to offer in comparison with this new religion of unity among the peoples? Yet he had the power to hold many; and already on that day on the Capitoline, three months before he led his ten thousand volunteers into Fiume, officers of the army and navy, combatants of every rank, had declared themselves ready to answer to his call if he decided to "do something for Italy."

Nothing but the deep disillusionment of the people could have made this possible. Whatever may have been D'Annunzio's motive; whether, having failed to win an epic death, he sought fame as the protagonist in a drama of life; whether, having made Dalmatia his mistress, he was burning to lay a living sacrifice at her feet; whether it was misguided patriotism that moved him or inflated selfishness, it is certain that he won the approval of much of the best element of the nation. Idealists and liberals, disappointed over the Conference of Paris, had lost their faith in the future. The cause for which they had led the country into war against the materialists and opportunists who

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stood for the greater gain of neutrality was being dragged in the dust. And it is not altogether strange if the old-world ideals which made D'Annunzio the representative of Venetian sentiment—chivalrous resistance, fearless defiance—seemed higher and more noble than the compromises of the peace-makers. It was clear that might was still right, in spite of the long struggle to disprove it. The ideal of the New World had failed.

The reaction of the Italian mind against any form of deception is immediate and uncompromising. Italians will sacrifice anything for a cause. They are always ready to fight for a point of honor, and their power of endurance has no limit. But they are too proud to be imposed upon, and they will not endure that the idol they bow before should bear the least suspicion of a sham. They see things in clear outlines, all the details in bold relief, after the manner of the Latin race. They have not the advantage of a northern mist, which dulls the edges of wrong lines and makes compromises easier. It was harder for Italy than for England to see in the Covenant of the League of Nations, "Whatever we shall will to make it."

And this strange situation came about; across the unity of sentiment in regard to Fiume, across the general resentment, there sprang a new cleavage. A young Venetian, writing from the center of Istria, expressed it thus:

And so the outcome of the war for Italy is that Italians are

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doomed to combat Italians, one side to defend the rights of Italy and Fiume, the other for the safety of that other Italy to which the Allies say, "Yield Fiume to Croatia or we will let you die of hunger."

Our government was obliged to compromise, yielding on account of our poverty. But there were those who would *not* yield, and so we have had a D'Annunzio and an army of volunteers. . . . I do not know what will become of those brave heroes, but I say to Mr. Wilson, if the auto-decision of Fiume is not the self-determination of a people, then we must deny the existence of God. . . . We Italians can understand the Croats, though they were the most desperate defenders of Austria against us to the end—they who now sit in Paris, not in the seats of the condemned, but on the bench of the judges. Yet we can forgive them and live at peace with them. For was not one great reason we fought the war the desire to give liberty and a fatherland also to the Croats? . . . If only the Americans could understand! If they could know what the Allies have done on the disputed frontiers! They would not then believe that Italy wants what is not her own, that Italy would not be fair to the Jugo-Slavs. . . . You, signora, who have lived among us, you know that we love Italy because the name Italy spells to us liberty, respect, the independence of justice and right, and, above all, love of humanity.

Another Italian, an enlightened liberal of an old Venetian family, wrote at about the same time: "D'Annunzio is making an ass of himself as usual. And Wilson is obdurate! How will it all end? Our nerves are on the verge of collapse."

Was there a deadlock between the Old World and the New?

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Watching from Venice the deliberations at Paris we saw, or thought we saw, that Europe and America were falling apart because of different aims and traditions. American ideals, we were told, were encountering a recrudescence of the old European nationalistic spirit. What I felt that day in Venice at war—that D'Annunzio and Judge Lindsey represented two worlds that would inevitably show themselves to be fundamentally at variance with each other—seemed a presentiment of the truth. Yet we have been forced to acknowledge that the Old World is not all on the same side of the Atlantic; and my supposition that those two worlds were Europe on the one side and America on the other was misconceived.

Only where the international conscience is awake can there be any hope of creating a new world out of the old. The desire to reform all nations, great outbursts of generosity toward foreign peoples, and the willingness to enter a conflict that was not our own did not prove that Americans were ready to become citizens of a new world based on a new nationalism. Perhaps we are too contented and prosperous to understand how deep is the longing for a new order precisely in those peoples in whose old-world quarrels we fear to become entangled. Where, indeed, should we look for a conviction of international responsibility, for the hope of uniting the nations in the service of humanity, if not to the fellow countrymen of Mazzini? Where

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should the world be safe for democracy if not in the Venice of Manin?

"Mazzini has been an exile from Italy for ten years," said a prominent Italian, impatient with a government that did not represent the governed. Many of them are saying the same thing under the enlightened despotism of Mussolini. But in the hearts of the people Mazzini has always been at home. His spirit was living among them even when Orlando was an obstructionist at Paris, even when D'Annunzio at Fiume was a Renaissance figure against a background of debased Machiavellianism.

D'Annunzio's following was strong in Venice, where the call of the cities across the narrow sea sounded to the Queen of the Adriatic like her own earlier cry for liberty from the Austrian. The city of Manin could not turn a deaf ear to the Italian cities of Istria and Dalmatia, which had once been Venetian cities, where the soft Venetian tongue is still spoken and the shore is adorned with Venetian campaniles. This appeal to sentiment and tradition went deep. Nevertheless, there were many who looked farther and were sustained by a greater hope. Marinoni, who left his work on international law to join the struggle and died of overwork, was as truly a martyr to his ideal of "human solidarity" and international good will as were the heroes Sauro and Battista to the cause of "redemption."

If the story of the occupation of Fiume by

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D'Annunzio and his legionaries is ever written from the inside, it will reveal an amazing mixture of right and wrong, of high ideals and low practices, of heroic resistance and weak indulgence, of the philosophies of Plato and Nietzsche, of the words of the New Testament and the practices of the Old. It will be seen, too, that rewards and punishments were distributed according to expediency rather than strict justice. The Prefect of Venice, because he lent the poet a launch, unwittingly, when he was starting on the expedition, lost his position and was forced to retire to private life. He was living in solitude in the north, on his ancestral estate, within sound and hearing of the daily Paris-Acropolis Express, consoling himself with books and music, when D'Annunzio, by that handsome gesture which completed the Fiume episode, was made Prince of Monte Nevoso by the Italian Government.

D'Annunzio did not return to Little Red Palace in the "city of his adoption." One had wondered, when one caught glimpses of him with some lady on a balcony or in a gondola by moonlight, whether he had not really chosen Venice for the reasons that led Don Juan to choose it, in Rostand's play, for his last night on earth. But he did not return as a conqueror in love or war and the story of his *dernière nuit* is still to be told.

Before the war an Italian mother whose grown sons are an honor to their country forbade the name of D'Annunzio to be mentioned in the family circle. If we could know more about that family and less about

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the genius and egoist we might understand better the qualities of the nation which responded with religious enthusiasm to Wilson's appeal for the building of a New World.

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RETURNING from Trieste in a torpedo-boat soon after the armistice, I fell to thinking of what I had seen since victory was proclaimed. Sitting high amid-ships, my arm resting on the base of a machine-gun and my eyes looking across the tossing sea to the long line of the Carnian Alps swept clear by the north wind and glowing in the sun, I had been meditating, between scraps of conversation with a young officer beside me, upon the magnificent success and desperate defeat the folds of those hills had concealed; of how Cadorna's army had made its way over them and through them with unsurpassable skill, paying for every meter of advance with blood, and had then retreated disastrously, inexplicably, from Caporetto. To-day the massive peaks, touched with every shade of glorious color, were radiant with victory. Even Hermada, the single height that had stood between that army and Trieste, lifted its purple shoulder as if absolved from shame. Yet the triumph, so swiftly won as to be even now almost incredible, was won, I reflected, not in the few days of brave advance but in the long year of patient, sternly disciplined resistance. Trieste was not won without Caporetto.

I thought of that while my mind was still teeming with the sights I had just seen, while the emotions of the thousands of human beings into whose faces I had looked, with many of whom I had talked, seemed to

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be throbbing in my own pulse. For I had been watching one of the saddest spectacles of the war in Italy, the multitudes of prisoners out of Austria. They came pouring down into Trieste, half-clothed, footsore, starving. Trieste had no food for them, and they were herded together in the vast open space of the quays, waiting until the new government should be organized and means of transportation reëstablished—pouring in by thousands when they could be taken out only by hundreds, huddled together in the icy wind which was keeping back the ships that might have saved them, exchanging their blankets for pieces of bread through the iron railing, standing in the mud, sitting about pale campfires, binding up their bleeding feet in rags, many of them falling faint with illness and dying where they fell. And these men belonged to a victorious army!

In the Trieste hotel, the *Savoia*—until November third, the *Palace Excelsior*—life had begun to be very gay. One met all of the officers there, military commanders and naval commanders, the hero of this and the hero of that, the commander of the port who had just come in on the last aeroplane from Pola, the well-known aviator, escaped from Austria, who was off to Venice in a submarine, the broad-shouldered general who was military governor, the colonel of the Arditi who had been summoned to keep order among returning prisoners, the colonel of sanitation who was organizing hospitals with great rapidity, the famous

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Rizzo with a rainbow of decorations on his breast. There were officers of the Italian army who were citizens of Trieste; there were loyal Italians from Trent who had been forced to lead regiments of the enemy (one of them wore a leather coat buttoned tight over his Austrian uniform); there were officers of the artillery who had come up through the promised land, and officers of the marine who had turned their ships to the need of the hour and were going backward and forward, over loosened mines, in the teeth of the Bora, bringing up supplies.

It was not long before women began to appear in the hotel and one afternoon there was a dance. I came upon the scene out of the cold dark street, made colder by the sound of water beating against the quays. I had fought my way against the wind from the soup-kitchen of the American Red Cross where all day long we had been giving out clothing to the prisoners—105,000 wretched men crowded together on the docks. The bright gowns, the music, laughter, the uncorking of bottles, smoke in the air, a confusion of voices. . . . I was half-dazed for a moment until a smiling lieutenant whom I had known earlier on the Piave front offered me a seat with his group of companions and I found myself among fellow workers in the prisoners' camp. The climax of the ball was a speech by a tall commander with grey about his temples, who paid graceful tribute to the sex and toasted the ladies of "*Trieste italiana*." A moment later, as the chatter rose

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again, two trim, good-looking youths came toward me, introduced themselves politely, explained that they knew I had clothing for prisoners . . . they, too, had been prisoners and had lost everything . . . could I give them a cape or an overcoat?

I had many curious encounters in that hotel. It was just such particles, bright and dark, that make up the kaleidoscope which is what one saw in the war zone. I met old friends and acquaintances—only Italians at first, then English and Americans. The two boys who came up from Cavazuccherina with our rolling canteen, shipped from Venice in a Red Cross launch, gave us an evening of high adventure. They had followed close behind the advancing army and served hot coffee to the fighting men. Ah, yes, they had seen fighting! Let no one suppose that there had been slight resistance in the battle of Vittorio Veneto. They had fed starving babies whose mothers wept at the sight of milk, they had passed through the Austrian lines with a Red Cross flag on their camion, and that afternoon they had set up the canteen in the prisoners' camp. They were young heroes bursting with their tales of prowess.

Some forty young English officers appeared one day, most of them aviators. They had walked out of their prison camp at the first news of revolution in Vienna and come down through scenes of mad disorder. They had fared well in prison and their stories were more often grotesque than tragic. Among them was an octogenarian captain of the merchant marine who had

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twice escaped with his life when his vessel was sunk by a submarine.

I had a long talk in the *Savoia* with Mr. Trevelyan, the English historian. His eyes were deeper than ever with the joy of our triumph. When I had seen him last in the Middle West, he was crushed as we all were by the news of Russia's first great defeat. "And how much better for the world," he said, "that we should win now with the help of America than that we should have won two years ago with the help of Russia! . . . It seems like a dream," he murmured, "like a dream!"

A very different experience was my conversation with an Austrian sympathizer, a woman who was letting her mother starve in Venice and die of grief while she stayed by a rich Austrian aunt. I was almost sorry she was not there later in the evening when two women and several men were driven out of the hotel with cries of "*Fuori Tedeschi.*" Still another participant was a reformer from Fiume, a tall, lank man who was forever haranguing a group of listeners, declaring "It was for *this* and for *that*, and for nothing else that the Italian soldier offered up his life." Sometimes he drew fire and there were discussions. Among his listeners was a soft-voiced lady of Trieste who had concealed twenty escaped prisoners in her house and defended a hospital at the point of her bayonet.

Images of all these people floated before my eyes as I sat on the deck of a torpedo-boat, and with them images of how many kinds and qualities of men among

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the prisoners! men of every type of manhood, from the dull earthen creature who clutched the shoes we gave him like some dumb animal, to strong, nimble youths with the light and fire of genius in their faces; from priggish little officers who cuffed their men about and wanted everything for themselves, to the one who, above all others, I shall remember as of the kinship of Saint Francis of Assisi, who took every burden upon himself to save his men—one for whom the most menial task held no indignity. He had the eyes of a dreamer and the virtues of a saint. But for the most part it was a dreary morass of unkempt, suffering humanity into which every thought of a great triumph seemed to sink far out of reach.

My young friend, the capitano, who stood beside me on the torpedo-boat, drew me up sharply by one of his comments. I call him my friend advisedly, though I had never seen him before and did not know his name until we landed. However, I knew the basic principle of his life, his religious and political theories, his valuation of science, his judgment of the nations and his reverence for Italy. I knew that he was a physicist in the University of Bologna, that he had a magnificent appetite and a wholesome fear of alcohol. He had clear, straight eyes, a firm mouth, and a face that rippled all over when some idea pleased him. I knew much of his experience of life and his hopes for the future. The crossing lasted four hours and I spent

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much of that time in meditation. One made friends with great rapidity in the war zone.

I was giving the capitano an account of the king's entrance into Trieste, involving a contrast which had left a rather unpleasant impression upon my mind, as I had seen it from the high deck of an old Austrian-Lloyd steamer—the very one, perhaps, on which I had sailed to Greece from this same harbor in one of my youthful wander-years. She was lying by the dock ready to put out for Venice when the destroyer, *L'Audace*, bearing the king, drew up on the other side of the narrow pier. I saw the king and his officers in their long grey-green capes; I saw the bridge decked in tricolor placed for the king's feet, I saw him descend and enter an automobile and pass through the lines of Bersaglieri to the central square; I heard the salutes of the waiting crowd, the music of the bands, the cheers that greeted the speech of welcome and the king's reply. All this I saw and heard with the emotions of a life-long lover of Italy, of one in whom no event of modern history had aroused so passionate an interest as the Italian struggle for independence and who rejoiced that now in this twentieth century the Risorgimento was accomplished. I remembered how Cavour had said that the complete liberation of Italy, as far as her natural boundaries, would be the work of the generation that should come after him, and I thought of Carducci's cry

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Rendi la patria, Dio! Rendi l'Italia
Agli italiani.

And yet as I looked at the visible realization of the dream, I could see just beyond, across on the neighboring dock, behind the king and his escort, a great sea of starving men, those same pitiable prisoners. "I shall never forget," I said to the capitano, "the background of that picture of triumph."

"I can understand," he answered. "But did you think how happy those men were at that sight? When they thought how good it is that their hardships have not been in vain? Be assured, Signora, those men are happy."

"But no!" I exclaimed, "they were hungry. You did not see them, as I did, dipping their hands into the boiling soup in their frantic haste."

"No, but even so, remember the Italian is an idealist. Why, on that first day when the news came of the victory the people of Trieste forgot their meals all day long. Nobody thought of eating. The Italian is like that. I am quite sure those prisoners forgot all about their hunger, even if they were starving."

When I entered the harbor of Trieste a few days after the occupation, the city was hidden by a mist and the long line of lights along the shore glowed like stars. I looked from them to the silver stars—symbols of Italy at war—on the coats of the officers about me. I was in the midst of a group of Triestini serving in

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the Italian army who were going home, after the long silence, to their families. I wondered if to them, too, those lights seemed like the stars of Italy and symbols of redemption. Or were they thinking of their families? They were gathered in the bow straining their eyes to see. At least I knew that when they murmured, "*Finalmente! Finalmente!*" (At last! At last!), they were not thinking of that rainy day on the most wretched craft that ever put to sea, of the eleven hours we took for a crossing I had since made in three, nor of their escapes from the front. These north Italians are very quiet and self-contained in their emotions. They are like their king, of whom someone has said, "He is one with his soldiers, a pure Latin, simple, serene, intrepid." I am sure that if they were to behold (as I think they did) the new earth and the new heaven they would smile with a soft light in their eyes and whisper, "*Finalmente.*"

I was glad to believe with the capitano that the Italian is an idealist. At the end of the war Italy believed firmly in the idealism of America. "The enthusiasm of Italy for America," said Mr. Trevelyan, "is one of the best results of the war. It gives me great hope for the future." Perhaps all men are idealists in their way. But I was wondering whether the war had brought us nearer to the realization of our ideals.

Here in Venice I watched the transformation of a city at war into a city at peace with feelings often at variance with the proper glow of triumphant pride.

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Venice was reawakening. Instead of silent streets and darkened palaces, oppressed by a dull weight of sand-bags, there were sounds of the hammer and the chisel in the air, lights shone from the windows, façades and porticoes lifted themselves free, San Marco was bursting its wooden frame, coming forth to the light like some enchanted image created by magic from a block of stone. Instead of complete darkness, with no light but the sun and moon, the waters gleamed and blazed with lights. Instead of torpedo-boats lining the broader canals, going in and out with military precision, there was a varied movement of many ships, of whistling steamers, of tugs, sailboats, launches, and barges. Two American cruisers were anchored in front of the Piazzetta (one stripe of their war paint would efface the Palace of the Doges) and an English and a Japanese battleship were in the same Great Basin. When the *Birmingham* blew her siren, people started for a moment, then sighed with relief, for it was not an air raid, and the night watch on the house tops was a thing of the past. The shops were opening, the people were coming back, one saw well-groomed children on the way to school (not merely the little waifs of our Red Cross *Asili*). A dressmaking shop of pretensions had just opened on the corner opposite the cinema where we used to crowd about the daily bulletin. When I went up the Grand Canal in the open launch piled high with children's clothes and boxes of condensed milk, ladies peeped at me out of the win-

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dows of their black-hooded gondolas. The angel on the peak of the Campanile no longer hid her wings in a covering of cloth. She shone in the sun like a golden Victory. But in Venice the symbol of victory is the Wingèd Lion who stood on his column uncovered and undaunted throughout the war.

Venice was reawakening, to the joy of everyone. Yet with all the gain there was, I felt, a certain loss; and those of us who saw Venice girt for war have a possession which few imaginations—certainly no feeble ones—will ever win. I could not regret the loss of beauty; I did not dwell upon the Venice without electric lights and crowds and business, when the Piazza of Saint Mark's was more than ever picturesque by day and mysterious by night, and the smaller squares were empty, and the canals were left to their winding ways and their color and their shadows. In the general life these things may count for little—although surely the Venice of history teaches us the unerring power of beauty in the fashioning of nations. But something, after the armistice was declared, had gone out of the air of Venice. The tension was relaxed, after the first frenzy of rejoicing, and things seemed somehow to have fallen apart. The sense of a high purpose, compelling to unity of action, had dropped upon a lower plane or was hidden beneath routine pursuits. Venice at war was the ancient city of gold refined of its dross. She was the Queen of the Adriatic armed and disciplined. Her sword was sharpened, her

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mind was alert, her temper was resolute, her will was unswerving. Only for a short time did she show anxiety, and that was not when the Austrian army was within eight miles of her and the incessant guns were growing louder; it was when, upon the first news that Germany was breaking, she feared that peace might be declared before Italy had freed her territory of the invader. Then faces were dark and spirits almost faltered. "To have our country given back to us by the Allies, across the peace table!" they exclaimed. "It would be worse than Caporetto. Far worse! Caporetto was our martyrdom. This would be our disgrace. Let us have no peace that we have not won." Then did waiting become difficult because then faith gave way to fear. But the first guns of the offensive restored the universal faith and now Venice was reawakening with her conscience clear.

But the temper of the place, after the incursions of population set in, was at once less serious and less gay. The soldier at the front is always gayer than the family he leaves behind him, and a few weeks before we in Venice were a part of the army with its single aim and its devotion. Now we found ourselves going our several ways and thinking everyone somewhat of his own fortunes. We could not toss aside our personal cares with the large unconcern of heroic days.

Below the surface, the same body of workers, civil and military, who had carried the burden through the changes, were working on as before with no other

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awakening than to a sense of graver problems, of added responsibilities, of more complex duties. And if in Venice, which suffered little from devastation and robbery, I felt that the wings that would soar were weighted, how austere was the joy of victory in the towns liberated from the invader! A soldier from the trenches whose wife and family were in the Trentino planted his feet firmly on our office floor and exclaimed: "They *must* be freed! I don't know when—perhaps next spring—but when the moment comes, we shall advance and set them free. Whether I die—that is nothing. *They* must be set free!" Now they were free, and they were robbed of all they possessed, stripped of their clothes, sick with memories and half-maddened with hunger. The more fortunate, who could fly before the invader, went back to find their ancestral trees cut down in wantonness and left where they lay, their ancestral furniture destroyed, their dining-halls turned into stables and their family portraits smashed into pieces. The dead waste of war, as inevitable as the ravages of the epidemic! The prospect darkened the vision.

When I confessed my misgivings to the capitano, he refused to be depressed. He was thankful with his whole heart that the war was over and he believed it had advanced the world a great stride forward. Yet he nursed no illusions about the future. Universal peace, he thought, must depend upon uniform education and ideals and a fair adjustment of interests. He

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pointed to the menace of the Yugo-Slavs and to certain differences—I think he called them jealousies—among the larger nations. “But is there any nobler thing,” he asked suddenly, with that rippling smile on his face, “is there any nobler thing than to defend one’s country and drive back the aggressor and liberate one’s brothers?”

It was the old-fashioned, time-worn doctrine, so scorned of intellectuals. Yet it rang true. And then by some happy chance the capitano remembered what Mazzini once said about the right and wrong of war, and in the words of that great prophet of the League of Nations, cited by this patriot of a younger generation, I found the cause of my discouragement and even the justification for the hope that sustained us through the war.

“War,” said Mazzini, “is a crime unless undertaken for the triumph of a great truth or for the ruin of a great lie.”

Among all the complex reasons for the war, as one after another the nations entered in, it became more and more clear that we were engaged in the ruin of a great lie. But a lie in ruins is no very imposing or inspiring sight. A ruthless giant driven back leaves a double train of carnage. Autocracy overthrown spreads devastation and carries down the innocent with the guilty.

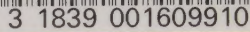
The cold wind struck our faces as we turned in toward Venice, between San Niccolo of the Lido and

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Sant' Andrea. We passed some units of the submarine fleet sunning themselves in the lagoon and some weird old flatboats, bearing large caliber guns, which I recognized as those I had seen on the Piave. An aeroplane flew overhead, perhaps carrying the mail to Trieste or Pola, perhaps only exercising its wings. We should never again see whole squadrons of them flying away across the Adriatic, and the line of balloons that marked the battle front had disappeared. But there was Venice, beautiful as before the world's disaster. Her towers were of the color of flame and the quality of light. Snow-capped mountains stretched away into the blue beyond her, and the pale Euganean Hills dropped from behind her campaniles into the sea.

As we drew in by the Arsenal I saw the American flag floating high on our battleship between the Campaniles of San Giorgio and San Marco. The Red Cross launch had carried that flag in and out through the canals of Venice for many months but it was as if I had not seen it for many years. My heart leaped to claim its promise. Every hope seemed about to be fulfilled. The League of Nations seemed an easy thing compared with what I saw there before my eyes under the sky. Permanent peace seemed less difficult than the things already accomplished. There was the palpable glory of Venice. And there was the symbol of my country which had come to her rescue. It was a promise of union and friendship in a discordant world.

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